MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

APRIL '02 • #227 $3

Poison Idea

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POLITICAL
COVER...

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ZOUNDS • LIFE.SET.STRUGGLE

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

SUBSCRIPTIONS: (postpaid prices)
•US: $3 each. 6 issue sub for $18. If you're in California, send $19.49 (tax).
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•Everywhere else: $8 each (air) or $5.50 (surface). 6 issue sub for $48 (air) or $33 (surface).

Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
Back issues #148, 150-154, 156-159, 161, 163, 166-181, 184-226 are as stated above in subscription info. See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.
Ad Copy In (with payment): by 15th of previous month–NO LATER!!!
Issue out: by 2nd week of following month.

★★ AD RATES & SIZES!! ★★
1/6 page: (2 3/8" x 5") $25
1/3 page long: (2 3/8" x 10") $70
1/3 page square: (5" x 4 7/8") $80
1/2 page: (7 1/4" x 5") $125

AD CRITERIA:
We will not accept major label or related ads, or ads for comps or EPs that include major label bands. We reserve the right to refuse ads for any reason at any time. Send ads properly sized on paper.

CLASSIFIEDS: NEW PRICE! $2 for a maximum of 40 words. No racist, sexist or fascist material. Send typed if possible. Cash only!!! Expect a two month backlog!

COVER: Mike Thorn

SELL MRR AT GIGS: Within the US, we'll sell them to you at $1.50 each ppd, cash up front. Contact us for non-US orders. Must order five or more of the same issue.

NEWSSTAND circulation through Big Top Newsstand Services, a division of the IPA. For more information call (415) 643-0161 or fax (415) 643-2983 or E-mail: Info@BigTopPubs.com. Also available from: Dutch East, Get Hip, Smash, Subterranean, Last Gasp, See Hear, Cargo, Armadillo, Ubiquity, Choke Inc, Desert Moon, and Marginal.

Please send all records, zines, letters, articles, scene reports, photos, subscriptions, interviews, ads, etc., to:

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PO BOX 460760
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Phone (415) 923-9814
maximumrnr@mindspring.com
(use this mainly for comments & letters. Use phone for ads & other business stuff)

TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

ROB COONS

- RAZORS EDGE-Thrash 'Em All-LP
- PHOBIA-Serenity Through Pain-LP
- DAYGLO ABORTIONS-Feed Us Fetus-LP
- MY OWN LIES/HOUSE IN TEXAS-split EP
- IRON LUNG-Demonstrations In-EP
- BORN DEAD ICONS-New Scream-10"
- L.I.E.-Why-EP
- DAS OATH-9"
- V/A-One Shot One Kill-LP
- Tragatelo-live

ARWEN CURRY

- BORN DEAD ICONS-New Scream-10"
- Tragatelo/Tragedy-live
- UNCURBED-Punks on Parole-LP
- DRATS-Ohio-EP
- FUNERAL-Cry of Desperation-EP
- UNCURBED-Punks on Parole-LP
- SEVEN DAYS OF SAMSARA/DESTROYER-EP
- BG-Congratulations-EP
- STAKEOUT-6-Song-EP
- ASSEL/MY OWN LIES-split EP

JONATHAN FLOYD

- DIRTBOMBS-Ode to a Blackman-EP
- BAD TIMES-LP
- LEE IMMORTAL COUNTY KILLERS-live
- BELTONES/STITCHES-live
- RAZORS EDGE-Thrash "Em All-LP
- LILLINGTONS-live
- NEW BOMB TURKS-Spanish Fly By Night-45
- DICK ARMY-Unsafe at Any Volume-CD/live
- SMUT PEDDLERS-Ism-CD
- STAGE BOTTLES-1993-2001-CD

JEFF HEERMANN

- ADVERTS-Crossing the Red Sea With-LP
- BAD TIMES-LP
- CLONE DEFECTS-Blood on Jupiter-LP
- SNIVELING SHITS-I Can't Come-LP
- BUFF MEDWAYS-Into Your Dreams-45
- CONSUMERS-Generations of Now-CD
- HOTWIRES-Red Glare of Rockets-10"
- OKMONIKS-Rock 'n' Roll-EP
- TOXIC REASONS-Independence-LP
- TMKF-live

TOM HOPKINS

- STAKEOUT-6-Song-EP/RIISTETYT-LP
- INSURGENT/SWSR-split EP
- DIXIE BUZZARDS-Save It For Me-EP
- SOMETHING IN THE WATER-Submitted-EP
- DRATS-Ohio-EP/UNCURBED-Punks-LP
- VAE VICTUS-LP/DANCE & DESTROY-EP
- XFILESX-Beaten Straight-EP/BAD TIMES-LP
- SICK TERROR/LEGION 666-LP
- THIS COMPUTER KILLS-Sleepwalking-EP
- CLONE DEFECTS-LP/OKMONIKS-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- REVEREND BEAT-MAN-CD
- DIXIE BUZZARDS-Save It-EP
- BAD TIMES-LP/Ostanek, Charm-films
- GASOLHEAD-Red Wine-10"
- DIRTBOMBS-Ode to a Blackman-45
- OKMONIKS-Rock 'n' Roll-EP
- BUFF MEDWAYS-Into Your Dreams-45
- CHARM CITY SUICIDES-The Worst Rise-LP
- CONSUMERS-All My Friends Are Dead-CD
- ROSETTES-Enchantment Under the Sea-LP

DULCINEA LOUDMOUTH

- DIRTBOMBS-Ode to a Blackman-45
- BAD TIMES-LP/PEROXIDE-Heart Disease-10"
- DIXIE BUZZARDS-Save It For Me-EP
- STEPSISTER-Autopilot Stuck-CD
- NUMBERS-Letters-EP/LOCKJAW-EP
- DISHES-Girls Can't Play-45
- MONKEYWRENCH-And One Really-LP
- DAYGLO ABORTIONS-Feed Us Fetus-LP
- OKMONIKS-Rock 'n' Roll-EP
- NEW BOMB TURKS-Spanish Fly By Night-45

RAY LUJAN

- BOMBSITE BOYS-Top Hits-EP
- STRANGE DIVISION-Kids Like You-EP
- JOHN STAMOS PROJECT-Take Your Best-CD
- NEW BOMB TURKS-Spanish Fly By Night-45
- DIALTONES/ALLEYGATORS-split 45
- OKMONIKS-Rock 'n' Roll-EP
- BONECRUSHER-For Your Freedom-EP
- GENERATORS-State of the Nation-10"
- NUMBERS-Letters-EP/FACTION-CD
- SIGN OFFS-LP/CONSUMERS-CD

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes.

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

DANCE & DESTROY-Mission Control-EP
THE OATH-9"/TOXIC REASONS-LP
CLONE DEFECTS-Blood on Jupiter-LP
CHARM CITY SUICIDES-LP/ADVERTS-LP
STAKEOUT-6-Song-EP/SIGN OFFS-LP
XFILESX-Beaten Straight-EP
NEW BOMB TURKS-Spanish Fly By Night-45
CRUCIAL ATTACK-Take it Back-EP
FUNERAL-Cry of State Desperation-EP
SOMETHING IN THE WATER-Submitted-EP

WILLIE NELSON

EL MARIACHI-Das Ding: Leben-LP
RAZORS EDGE-Thrash 'Em All-LP
VAE VICTUS-Ugly Reflection-LP
BG-Congratulations-EP/IRON LUNG-EP
LIFE-EP & LP/XFILESX-Beaten Strainght-EP
STAGNATION'S END/PARANOIA KEEPS CRAWLING-split LP
SDS-10"/STAKEOUT-6-Song-EP
SEVEN DAYS OF SAMSARA/DESTROYER-EP
ARMED WITH INTELLIGENCE-What May-EP
SOMETHING IN THE WATER-Submitted-EP

DONNA POOLE

BAD TIMES-LP
CHARM CITY SUICIDES-The Worst Rise-LP
CLONE DEFECTS-Blood on Jupiter-LP
SPITFIRES-Jukebox High-EP
SPEDS-You Can't Win-EP
ADAM WEST-Flower, Fist & Bestial Wail-EP
BG-The Congratulations-EP
KILL-A-WATTS/CATHOLIC BOYS-split EP
DIALTONES/ALLEYGATORS-split EP
OKMONIKS-Rock 'n' Roll-EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

SONS OF LIBERTY-We Shall Meet Again-EP
BONECRUSHER-EP/ DOROCHYS-CD
AGNOSTIC FRONT/TSOL/CASUALTIES-live
CRIKEY CREW-CD/DISCIPLINE-LP
LOIKAEMIE/MENACE-split EP
PILLOCKS-CD/VERY METAL-CD
STAGE BOTTLES-CD/OXYMORON-CD
STREET BRATS-Short-Fused Street Punk-EP
STITCHES/BELTONES - live
GROUPUSKULL-Tise Party-EP

MIKE THORN

WOLFBRIGADE-Progression/Regression-LP
UNCURBED-Punks on Parole-LP
BG-Congratulations-EP/LIFE-LP
FUNERAL-Cry of State Desperation-EP
HIBERNATION-Loneliness-EP
SOMETHING IN THE WATER-Submitted-EP
STAKEOUT-6-Song-EP
V/A-Candyass-LP
Tragedy/Tragatelo-live
SEVEN DAYS OF SAMSARA/DESTROYER-EP

RYAN WELLS

CHARM CITY SUICIDES-The Worst Rise-LP
BAD TIMES-LP
CLONE DEFECTS-Blood on Jupiter-LP
OKMONIKS-Rock 'n' Roll-EP
REVEREND BEAT-MAN-Get on Your-LP
STRANGE DIVISION-Kids Like You-EP
V/A-Wild News From French Radio-EP
SONGS FOR EMMA-live
HOTWIRES-Red Glare-10"
NEON BOYS-That's All I know-EP

KENNY KAOS/REMA YOUNG

NEUROTIC SWINGERS/DOGMATIC SALAMANDER-EP
GASOLHEADS-Red Wine-10"/DISHES-45
V/A-Drunks, Guns, & Livestock-CD/NUMBERS-EP
DIALTONES/ALLEYGATORS-split EP
NEW BOMB TURKS-Spanish Fly By Night-45
DIRTBOMBS-Ode to a Blackman-45
SNIVELLING SHITS-I Can't Come-LP
CATHOLIC BOYS/KILL-A-WATTS-split EP
SMOOTH AND GREEDY-Prison Talk-LP
FAVORATS-Destination Outta Space-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

Sobstory #4
Cometbus #48
Scanner #11
World War 3 #31
Chumpire #145
Gullible #23
Suburban Voice #45
Women's Self Defense #1
Medicine #99
Tight Pants #9

ZINE SHITWORKERS

Peter Avery
Aragorn
Michelle Barnhardt
Jerry Booth
Tim Brooks
Amy Browne
Kat Case
Karoline Collins
Robert Collins
Rob Coons
Carl Cordova
Paul Curran
Andy Darling
Mikel Delgado
Aaron Detroit
Adrienne Droogas
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#143/Apr '95. Vindictives, Stinkerbell, Jesus Christ Superfly, New Day, Registrators, Youth Brigade, Pit.

#146/July '95. Riverdales, Head, Bristles, Aut Aut, Schleprock, Spanakorzo, McRackins, YAPO, 10-96, Empress Of Fur, Underhand, Nailed Down.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottom Feeders, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-Fract, Dead End Kids.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#157/June '96. Against All Authority, The Criminals, Wardance, Heroines, Brain Brats, Rudiments, Chinese Millionaires, Sons Of Hercules, Your Mother, Yellow Scab.

#158/July '96. Workin' Stiffs, The Gain, Ashley Von Hurter, Haters, The Process, Brother Inferior, Judge Nothing, Break-ups, Not For Rent.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Brand New Unit, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Round Ear Spocks, David Hayes/Very Small Recs, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Death Wish Kids, Fun People, Fat Drunk & Stupid.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#167/Apr '97. Grand Theft Audio, No Fraud, Gauze, Nobodys, Sloppy Seconds, Danko Jones, Viceroys, Forgotten.

#168/May '97. Cretin 66, Fishsticks, UK Subs, Distemper, Enewetak, Fields Of Shit.

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Strychnine, Idiots, Pelado Recs, Misanthropists, Racetraitor, Violent Society, Knuckleheads.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#173/Oct '97. Hot Water Music, Fat Day, Los Tigres Guapos, Les Partisans, Bristols, My 3 Scum, Space Shits, Pessimiser Recs, Reclusives, Nick Qwik.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#176/Jan '97. Scared of Chaka, Voorhees, Stalingrad, Upstairs People, Squid Boy, Izgoy, Beltones, Sky Grain, 1,4,5s, Ducky Boys, JCCCamp.

#177/Feb '98. Superfly TNTs, Submachine, Dropout, Society Gone Madd, Pinhead Circus, Ann Beretta, Blackbird, Naive, Useless ID, Quarantine.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats

.**#179/April '98.** Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eycliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, All Bets Off, Bonecrusher, Summerjack, Cell Blck 5, DDI, Normals, Pirate Radio issue.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City , Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#211/Dec '00. Fly & Seth Tobocman, Anti/Dogmatikss, Hissyfits, Aus Rotten, Media Blitz, Rocks, Hospital Food, Falsies, White Stripes, 9 Shocks Terror, Tijuana Bibles.

#212/Jan '00. Avail, Born Dead Icons, From Ashes Rise, the Voids, the Guilty Pleasures, xLimpwristx, Chachi on Acid.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

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¡ACHTUNG!

INTERNATIONAL MRR READERS

¿THE POST OFFICE HAS DONE IT AGAIN?

YEP THAT'S RIGHT, THE PRICE OF INTERNATIONAL POSTAGE HAS NEARLY DOUBLED. PLEASE SPECIFY AIR OR SURFACE WHEN ORDERING!

Sorry this is so expensive, we're not happy about it either (however, zines shipped by surface should still arrive before it hits newstands). You can also save money by selling MRR at shows, bulk rate boxes of 20 are available. We are investigating cheaper methods of shipping so stay tuned!

NEW MAILORDER RATES

	one magazine (u.s. dollars)	two zines	three zines	four zines	five zines	subscription rates (six months)
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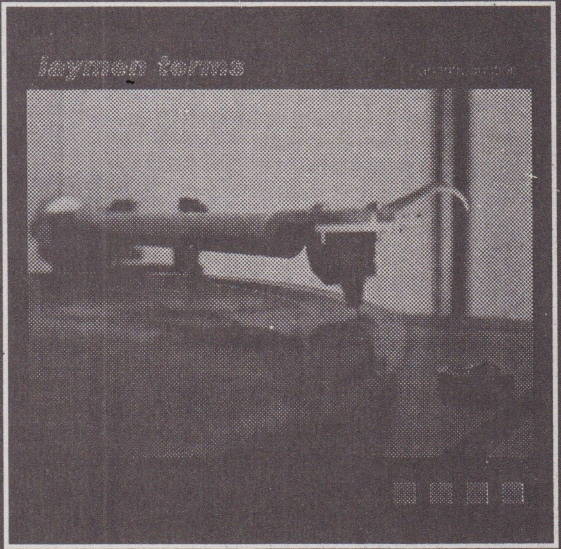
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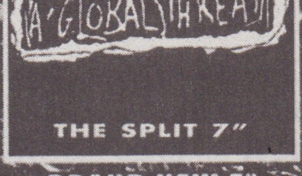
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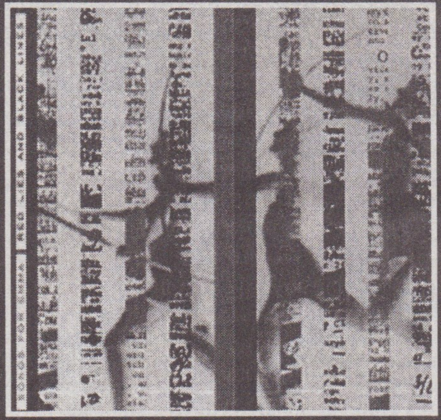

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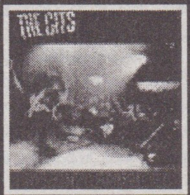

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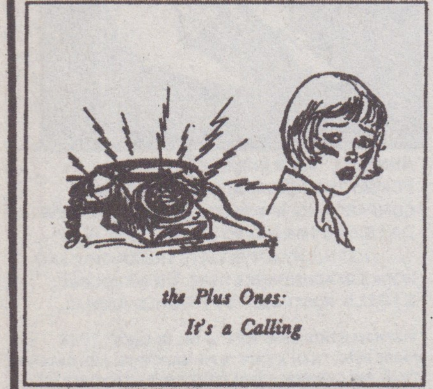

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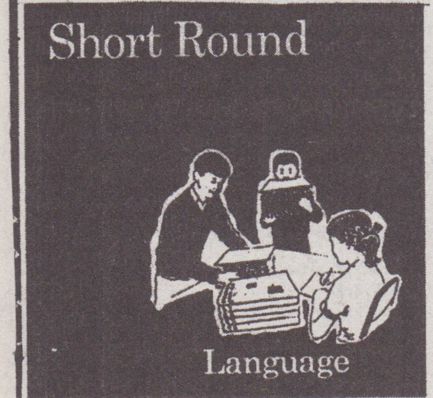

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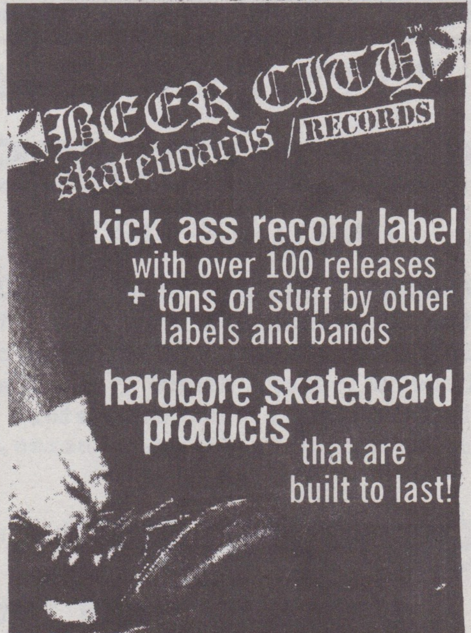

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LETTERS

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Dear MRR,

This is certainly a dark day day in punk history. An astonishing 91 years ago today, when Taft lumbered through the halls of the White House and the world had never known a World War, Ronald Wilson Reagan was born into the world! Turning 91 today, Reagan has cruelly and inexplicably lived longer than any president ever. The former president is rumored to be a vegetable, wheelchair bound and only slightly more lucid than he was in the twilight of his presidency. Nonetheless, his survival is an ironic tribute to the man's legacy—the less of him there actually is, the more he and his ideas endure.

Believe me, I am haunted by the fact that through some accident that is no fault of my own, I could be fatally injured while Reagan still lives. Today, for instance, it is rainy and cold here in Chattanooga and the streets are covered in ice. A car could easily lose control and hit me while, somewhere under an endless Southern California sun, Nancy is feeding Ronnie his birthday cake, carefully blended 'til it's edible through a straw. Yet, even at 91, it doesn't seem like there's an end in sight. When, oh when, will it end? Now I know how Jesse Helms must feel when he thinks of Fidel, late at night.

Nonetheless, there hasn't been a lot to cheer about lately, so for inspiration a lot of us have been talking about Reagan dying, saying this must be the year. It is, in any event, something to look forward to. When things are especially dire, I make more preparations for my forthcoming obituary of Reagan, an acid-filled screed that will make Mencken's obituary of William Jennings Bryan look like a fucking Burt Bacharach song. A lot of my friends have been talking about what to do when he goes. I figure it's a punk holiday so you have to ditch work as soon as you hear the news. Greg Harvester says we should all agree to shotgun a beer, nationwide, as soon as we hear. Sounds good to me. Any ideas? I'm thinking spontaneous parades, free food, generator shows in the street. We have to do something to make up for what a rotten sucker punch it was for Joey Ramone to die first. Take care,

Iggy Scam/ Chattanooga, TN

Maximum,

Too many people are using the letters column as free advertising space. I do not feel that people should be allowed to advertise their "non-profit DIY record labels" or anarchist/punk/whatever "collectives." I also do not feel that the letters column should be used as a place to air disputes or put people down. I feel that the letters column should be used only for letters regarding the articles/writers of MRR.

People who wish to promote themselves and their ideas, should pay money to use the "classified ads" of MRR. I feel that all collectives/DIY record labels/people who hate other people should pay money to run classified ads in MRR. The classified ads are where people can pay money to say whatever they like. Sincerely,

Anna Smith

Dear MRR,

Josh and I have a combined 20 years in the punk scene, and through the years there's been plenty of things you've done that we've frowned upon, but never bad enough for us to have to write a letter.

Let's not play grabass here, let's get straight to the point. What is the deal with Tom Hopkins? First of all he tries to pull some "emo-er than thou" attitude, then flips script & tries to be "the wild crazy drunk guy" (should have kept the dreads, bro.) And now this shit with him trying to starve himself down & become Ally McBeal's stunt double, hey Tom could you please "stop the insanity!" We've always known Tom was 3/4 a square & have turned a blind eye to many of his "questionable activities." Like the time at a party in the Mission when we caught him in the bathroom with two Romulans talking about how great the new Pleasure Forever album is! I mean, what the fuck is that! Or the other time he went around bragging that he polished off a whole bottle of Strawberry Hill all by himself (good job Tom, there's a gold medal waiting for you.) I mean come on! And I'm not even gonna mention how he still talks about a Still Life reunion in a positive way. Tom, maybe if you could stop name dropping Davey from the Promise Ring for one second, you might realize the error of your ways.

Why don't you hop off the sugar busters diet & get back in touch with the scene... One last thing, the list is thousands long, Tom, we don't want to have to add your name to it. Sincerely,

Josh Reynolds & Mikey Ott

Hey MRR,

Increasingly following form with mainstream entertainment culture, punk seems to come across as a paid-for spectator transaction rather than a tangible event or the signifier of an open-ended lifestyle. Enter—and exit—Zegota. Despite a limited following outside of the extreme DIY underground, North Carolina's Zegota(e) is as precious a band American punk has known for some time. A 2000 video documentary from Lost Film Festival organizer/Great Clearing Off guitarist Jon Foy attempted to capture the band's sense of self with only partial success. Simply put, Zegota is very much something that needs to be experienced rather than watched second-hand. On Saturday, Jan. 26, the band played its final announced show in the United States. Throughout the next few months, the members will be collectively moving to Stockholm, Sweden. The fact that the band was not actually breaking up, but rather following its perceived next level posed a unique challenge to everyone in the crowd—not the fatal notion of a funeral as much as the "What If?" of a choice.

In an emotional performance

following the first day of this year's National Conference on Organized Resistance in Washington DC, Zegota smashed much of the illusion clouding modern punk for me. As heckles, peripheral conversations and giggles droned on in the back of the room, singer Moe spoke bitterly about the recent suicide of a friend, suggesting that despite all our inside jokes and silly distractions, maybe everything wasn't going to be all right. In a world of very real misery, how much of our reality (as punks, as artists, as lovers, dreamers and humans) is a euphemism? Zegota's attitude is never one of condemnation or judgment though. Their smiles aren't the result of ignorance or denial, but the will to keep on keeping on (to quote the popular truck-stop saying) in spite of all the things meant to grind us down.

Their final song in the United States was a cover of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young's "Ohio," a fitting analogy to this commitment. And while the switching from "Nixon" to "Bush" in the song's chorus might have represented nothing more than a clever updating for some of the crowd, the song's message hardly needs a more timely translation—in days like these it isn't always safe to stand up for things you believe.

Our irony and our comfort will not save us. Whether any of our other wild schemes will (be they art, community, sex, drugs, rock 'n roll, trainhopping, employment or activism) are ultimately up to us. I've never heard such silence at the end of a punk band's set as there was when Zegota finished playing that night. It's fitting, I guess, because I don't think I've ever seen a band like Zegota. I found myself crying on two separate occasions during their set. When they were done, I—like most of the crowd—was silent. The silence stuck for several minutes, as I walked to the back of the room to de-pressurize. It was time to say goodbye. Goodbye to four individuals who, for me, have always been real examples of kindness, hospitality and passion. Goodbye to one of the most sincere and consistently intense punk bands today. And, in the spirit of the challenge I tend to think they wanted to extend with so powerful a set, goodbye to the passive approach to life that tells us we can get by on "tomorrows," "maybe laters" and "this is good enough for now." You remind me what it's like to be amazed. Thank you and good luck abroad.

Mike McKee/ Kill the Man Who Questions/ PO Box 890/ Havertown, PA 19083/ killthemail@yahoo.com

Yo,

For those of you who made it, those of you who couldn't get in and those of you who couldn't make it, the benefit for Karla Maddog Michelle, drummer for The Controllers, Legal Weapon and the Leaving Trains, Saturday night, 1/26/02, at Mr. T's was a bigger success than we could have hoped for. The show ran like clockwork and all the bands played great sets. Mr. T's was filled beyond capacity. They even had to turn people away. Towards the end of the evening the fire marshal came and threatened to shut us down if we didn't thin the crowd out. Now that's punk rock. Fortunately most of the bands had already played and enough of the crowd was willing to leave when asked. For the record here's who played and in what order--Ronnie and the Bastards, Bangers and Mash, Joe Baiza, The Skulls, Mike Watt, The Humpers, The Controllers, The Rotters, The Urinals, The Leaving Trains and The Jack Brewer Band. The Dogs made it onto the poster and T-shirt but regrettably had to cancel. Maddog wanted to do a couple of songs but sadly was too weak. In fact, she just barely made it to her own benefit. We raised $2700. It was one great night of punk rock.

Phester Swollen - Rotter

Dear MRR and its readers,

Here is the Punk Census Bureau with some statistical data for everyone's enjoyment. In the last 14 issues of MRR, ranging from January 2001 to February 2002, I counted 124 interviews with either all-male bands or other guys involved in one way or another in the "scene," and only 22 interviews with bands that had female members in them or women involved in the "scene." Interestingly, during that time span only 1 all-female band was interviewed in the pages of MRR. Accordingly, 85% of all interviews were conducted with all-male bands, while 15% of them were with the "mixed" gender bands. The percentage of interviews with all-female bands (or rather *one* band) was a whopping 0.8%. In addition, out of the 17 "mixed" gender bands interviewed, 14 hailed from English speaking countries, and 1 was from Holland, 1 from Brasil, and 1 from Venezuela (the last 2 bands were interviewed in the Latin America "*special*" issue). It's also important to keep in mind that in most of the mixed gender bands women are the minority (and usually sing), so that the ratio of women and men MRR covered was actually even lower (about 1 to 99 maybe?). However, there are so many more women involved in DIY projects locally and abroad than one might conclude from reading MRR. At the Punk Census Bureau we call MRR practices Biased Judgment Sampling Techniques. Personally, I'm fed up with and bored of looking at and reading about what punk/hardcore/etc. is from the perspective of white middle-class dropout tough rebellious boys in their uniforms (Stereotyping? Flip through the pages of MRR...) It would make sense for a publication like MRR to actively seek out and interview more womens' bands because they are out there, they are active, and they kick *ass*!

Anyway, the results are in, and hopefully they will spur some discussion in the scene that strives oh-so-hard to present itself as being equal (or maybe "separate-but-equal" - remember that phrase?). Please support womens' bands/projects from all over the world.

Adam Wroblewski, Riveter Distro/Zine (distributing & promoting all-female bands or bands that are a product of cooperation between sexes)/ PO Box 411621/ Chicago, IL 60641/ riveterdistro@hotmail.com

Adam,

Thanks for crunching the numbers. If you submitted an interview or article, that would be great, too—even greater, really.

Jeff M.

Hello MRR,

I was hoping I would never have to write a letter in complaining about being burned, but lo and behold, here it is. It seems Mike Myers at Fast For Life! Records is $20 richer from me, and no telling how much more ahead financially from ripping other people off as well. Back in October I contacted him about getting 10 copies of the Crucial Unit / Killed In Action split EP for my mailorder. He was quick on responding, and seemed pretty trustworthy. So I sent him $20. Time goes by, and I write again. He apologizes and says he'll send the records out that week (he wrote that on

November 29). Well even more time passes, and nothing. So I write another letter and ask what the hell is up. No response. I've even tried checking his web site, and it's down. So I guess I have to chalk it up to lesson learned and never to deal with the guy again. Obviously. The funny thing is I see the record in various mailorders, but for some reason he can't send me the records I've ordered and paid for up front. Would it be cheap to say fuck him? Seeing as the economy isn't too hot these days, I could use a bargain, so fuck Fast For Life Records. Anyone contemplating ordering from the rip off, you might want to think again.

Have a nice day,

Matt / Some Strange Music

Hey readers,

The roots of 13th Note of Glasgow, Scotland as an integral and important part of the independent music scene in the UK go back to 1987, where it began as an inexpensive and friendly rehearsal and recording studio. This evolved into a bigger and better studio and rehearsal space attached to a bar/cafe called The Apollo. After less than a year, a fire in the business upstairs caused the Apollo to flood, and it closed. The operation moved to another venue, and in 1992 the 13th Note was born.

The main focus of the 13th Note from its inception has been a dedication to providing a safe haven for independent music in Glasgow, and serving a varied menu of vegan food. Over the years, hundreds of local and touring bands have played there, including Nation of Ulysses, Born Against, Pink Kross, Lung Leg, Ex Cathedra, Belle & Sebastian, Mogwai, Sleater Kinney, Alex Chilton, The Gossip, Lungfish, Life... But How To Live It, Yummy Fur, the list goes on. And these are just some of the bands that may be recognizable to MRR readers--the venue supported a huge cross-section of the music scene, from electronic to folk to country to jazz and everything in-between. There are other places in Glasgow catering to one or more of these styles--but the 13th Note was unique in that it never operated a 'pay-to-play' policy. It was the ideal place for new bands to get their start and find an audience.

Despite being a popular bar/cafe/venue with a healthy income, the 13th Note still had incurred many debts over the years which were hanging over its head. There was a definite belief that the worst was behind them, and that a few more years in their current two locations would see the debts cleared. However, Her Majesty's Customs and Excise saw it differently, and the business is now in liquidation, which basically means that the owners have been deposed and it is being run by an accounting firm until a buyer can be found or the debts can be paid off. The original owner has made what he considers to be a fair offer which has been rejected by the liquidators, who are holding out for the highest price possible. The fact is that the 13th Note is more than just a business, it is a community, and it's unlikely that any new owner would run the place with the same values (commitment to veganism and support of the local music scene). It's also unlikely that the community of people who support the 13th Note now would continue to do so under new ownership.

A trust has been set up to help the 13th Note in its fight to continue to exist in its current form, to consolidate support of all kinds, and to help in cases of individual need or hardship of employees arising from the current situation. The goal is to either retain possession of the 13th Note as it originally exists, or, if that fails, to take up where they left off, applying the dedication to independent music and veganism to a new venue.

It would be a terrible shame if this meant the end of the 13th Note, because there are so few places like it anywhere. For much more background, news, and information on how you can help, go to www.help13.co.uk.

Allan McNaughton

Maximum Rocknroll,

We have been notified that, after only a few months in prison, Dustin Camp has been placed in the review process for early release (parole). We did not expect this to happen for at least another year. Apparently he becomes eligible for parole on June 7, 2002. His file was placed in the review process December 11, 2001 *only three months after he was sentenced to eight years!!!* Unfortunately, we were not notified.

We—*that includes you*—can have an impact on this decision. Anyone who wants to can submit a "letter of protest" or a "petition of protest" to the parole board. These documents would be placed in to Dustin`s file and would be reviewed by the parole board. We have been assured that such documents can be very effective in influencing the board`s decision.

A petition is in the process of being drafted. As soon as possible, we intend to post it on the website (www.briandeneke.org) in a format that you could download. You would then be able to get signatures on these petitions and send them to the parole board. In addition to the petitions, *anyone who wants to* is encouraged to send a personal letter to the board. In such a letter you should state your feelings about early release for Dustin Camp. But even more importantly, let the board know how Brian`s death—and the original jury decision for probation—affected you.

This is an opportunity for you to work within the system and to make a difference. Any assistance you can provide will be greatly appreciated. Unfortunately, we don`t have a lot of time. Two months have already passed. Theoretically, Dustin Camp`s file could go to the parole board at any time. We must act quickly to get protests in to that file.

Any letters or petitions submitted will need the following information: At the top, place a heading, "Re: Dustin Michael Camp T.D.C.#01060181." They should be mailed to: Raven Kazen, Director / Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles/ P.O. Box 13401/ Austin, TX 78711. Letters can also be faxed to: 512-452-0825, Attention: Raven Kazen (note:Raven is a woman.)

You can close your letters with a sentence similar to: *"I strongly oppose the early parole of Dustin Camp. Justice demands that he serve the full prison term given to him at the time he was sentenced."* Thanks for your help. Your support means a lot to us.

Mike, Betty, and Jason Deneke

Dear MRR,

First allow me to explain who I am. For the purposes of this letter, my name is Deicide, and I play in the band Hopeless Dregs of Humanity. I am a worker in the Ever Reviled Records collective, a directly democratic and collectively owned workspace that is committed to releasing anarchist and socially progressive music. I also am involved in organizing direct action that dismantles corporate dictatorship. I do journalistic work for Independent Media Center and

Impact Press as well. I list these things not as a cheap attempt at self-promotion or as a resume. I believe it is important to understand context before I begin this rant. I only wish the corporate-owned sources of media would be so honest.

Recently, I was turning the pages of MRR #225. In it was a half-page ad from TKO Records that announced MRR's refusal to print an ad that displayed an American flag. Above it was another ad that contained a poignantly appropriate quote from Leo Tolstoy about the ideology of patriotism. I assume that it was in response to TKO's ad. I also read the letter exchange between TKO and MRR.

I am writing this letter to express my support for MRR's decision to not print TKO's ad. The political climate that has been created in the Middle East that is distinctly anti-American is largely due to the continual American military intervention and violence in the region. Instead of addressing the capitalist interests (particularly of the oil industry) that have fueled such policies, corporate and government media sources have eliminated any sort of debate other than that which supports escalating these exact same policies, placing millions of lives at risk. The only language to explain what is happening for working class people in America is one of irrational jingoism, ignorant patriotism, and violent racism. In the face of violent repressive propaganda from corporate and government media sources, support for those who are exposing the economic and political interests behind the "war on terrorism" has become increasingly important. MRR has been doing such work, and the decision to be committed to such journalism is one democracy-lovers in punk culture should support.

In my opinion, by making this decision, MRR is also helping to transform punk from just another sub-culture that mimics American culture on a small scale into a genuine counter-culture that is interested in transforming society where life is not valued devalued for money and oil. In this increasingly militarized world, I believe this is very important. Media platforms have been monopolized by those who have vested economic interests in American imperialism. It is good to know that MRR is committed to not being one of them.

"Patriotism is the principle that will justify the training of wholesale murderers," is a quote from Leo Tolstoy that could not be more applicable. The murder count in Afghan civilians has exceeded the murder count of September 11th. This is not even making mention of the 150,000 Iraqi people that have been murdered at the hands of the US military sanctions and bombings for the past ten years. The murder will continue until the people of the world build an international political and economic democracy and dethrone capitalist dictatorship.

The content and editorial policy of MRR has helped prove that it is a reliable source for independent thinking in America and a voice for the interests of oppressed and working people, not just in the Middle East and the USA... but all over the world. Thank you for being committed to that. Oh, and did I mention that MRR rocks my pants off? In solidarity,
Deicide

Hey *Maximum Rocknroll*,
My name's Nicki Sicki. Years ago I sang for Sick Pleasure and Verbal Abuse and more recently, Humungus. Before I start in on why I'm writing, I want to say I really appreciate your magazine. I'm in prison (again) and the news and info I get from you is the only alternative press I get. The columns, some I agree with, some I don't, but Mykel Board is reason enough to keep coming back. Same goes for Nathan Berg, Dave Dictor, or Felix Havoc.

Now—why I'm writing. I agree with your decision not to run the Bodies ad. It's your zine, not "the scene's." But I don't understand you printing the column by Anonymous Boy. Never mind the fact that his column has about as much to do with punk as a Blink 182 record. In issue #225, he talks about sewing an American flag on his backpack after Sept. 11. He says he's not anti-flag and wants to reappropriate the flag to use as he sees fit. I'm sorry, but flying a flag right now (or any time) is showing your support of the actions of the US government. Can southerners reappropriate the rebel flag? How about if a German decided to take back the swastika and make it stand for whatever they want it to stand for. The American flag does not stand for "freedom, liberty..." or any of that, it's the US government's trademark. And then this month, John Ringhoff lists the worst song of the year as "any unpatriotic song." I'm so sick of this newfound patriotism. Even in prison, it's all you hear. This is a prerelease, so you wear your own clothes, and one guy runs around with a homemade t-shirt saying "if you don't love America—parole to Afghanistan."

One thing before I go, how come there's no punk rockers in prison? I mean, I can't be the only one getting caught. Anyway, I had to get that off my chest. I'm getting out soon (May 5th) and have two records coming out on Beer City in the next month or so. One is a repress of the Verbal Abuse record with about 10 or 15 live tracks (don't but the Blitzcore boot, it's inferior and they're ripping us off) and the other is a new Humungus record, "I Hate the Motherfucking Cops." Anybody want to write, send it here: Roy N. Hansen 787379/ 759 Heintzelman Rd./ Mineral Wells, TX 76067. Thanks,
Nicki Sicki

PS "We say this, that the sins our fathers sinned was that they did not trust liberty wholly. They thought it possible to compromise between liberty and government, believing the latter to be a 'necessary evil,' and the moment the compromise was made, the whole misbegotten monster of our present tyranny began to grow." Voltairine de Cleyre

Dear MRR,
Greetings! A very odd and most amusing thing happened this morning. After returning from a doctor call-out, I was informed by the screws that the counselor wanted to see me. I figured it was probably another mail rejection (I get a lot of those, sometimes valid, sometimes not), and I was right. But, how could I have known it would be the latest issue of MRR! I have been getting MRR for something like over three years now on this bit, and never has it been rejected. Well, I should've known, what with the upcoming "queer" issue, that it would be the first one to be rejected. See, the Michigan Department of Corruption bans any and all pictures and/or descriptions of sexual acts between members of the same sex that are of the same sex as the inmates at the receiving facility. Needless to say, the "queer" issue violated that particular little piece of bigotry-based policy. Despite the prevalence of homosexuals and homosexual behavior in the penitentiary, we are still discriminated against with the full acquiescence and endorsement of the law.

At any rate, the first thing that

drew the attention of the mailroom censor was, of course, the words "Queer Issue." Well, this in and of itself is not grounds for rejection. But then there was the picture of two skins kissing on the cover. Well... that's a bit of a stretch to define as sexual activity, and the counselor agreed. But! Leave it to good ol' Mykel to push the envelope past the boundaries of "acceptable" content as far as the MDOC is concerned. Nevertheless, why did I say all this was amusing? Well...

For some bizarre reason, the fine folks at MRR keep sending me two issues every month. This is fine as I have a friend who very much enjoys the zine and can't afford it, so I just give him my extra issue. Well, as it turns out, this is a good thing that I have been receiving the extra issues, because the first one for this month made it past the censor. So there I was, listening to this bozo ramble on about how the zine depicts homosexual activity, and I've already got the offending issue sitting in my cell! *Ha ha ha ha!* What a bunch of inconsistent imbeciles. I suppose I should be glad of their incompetence, but I'm still a bit miffed about them trying to reject a zine because it was a small Xeroxed-type zine. I did receive the zine after a hearing (I always request a hearing.) And I ought not refer to the counselor as a bozo. He's actually not a bad sort, as far as these people go. He has gone out of his way for me to check out the policy regarding various mail restrictions, and has at times ruled in my favor. I just can't help having contempt for any and all authority figures.

On an unrelated note, I want to thank Arwen and Mike for continuing to carry the torch lit so long ago by Tim Yo (RIP) and the bizarrely jingoistic conservative, Mr. Bale. I want to applaud your courage in deciding not to run the TKO ad. While at first I thought it may have been another example of MRR's exclusionary policies *[it is - ed.]*, I have to admit, after seeing the ad is *Hit List* (oh no! not *Hit List*!), and admitting to my own lack of knowledge of the Bodies' politics, I agree with your decision. When deciding to run an ad of that nature, it is indeed imperative to consider the politics of the people involved. TKO's knee-jerk reactionary repsonse to discontinue any relations with and sever all ties to MRR is very sad. TKO is an awesome label with some awesome bands, and I will be sorry to no longer see their ads gracing the pages of MRR, or get to read the reviews of their releases in MRR. Since I also subscribe to the sublime and bizarre *Hit List*, I will not miss it too much. But, unfortunately, I know the arrogant, reactionary politics of Mr. Bale, and the uber-capitalist stance of Livermore turns off many of those who may enjoy the bands on TKO, therefore denying the support to such an incredible label with such great bands that they may have received had they continued to utilize MRR as a source of advertising and publicity.

Also, I would like to give big kudos to Mimi for how she has greatly improved the MRR news section. It is only through self-awareness and education that we can guard against the impending tyranny that I see creeping around every corner. We must, as intelligent and educated punks, make every effort to keep informed, and Mimi is doing an excellent job. The news section is definitely my favorite part of the zine, and I would like to see it expanded.

And to Mimi: I know you have reams of info that you must sift through, and I do not envy you the job of having to decide what is fit to be printed. That is a task for a better person than I. It is unfortunate that the current skullduggery in the "War on Terrorism" is taking up nearly all of the news space. There are so many important issues, and people need to know. Take, for example, the whole Enron scandal. I can only laugh hysterically top see how the mighty fall. And then to see the Bush/Cheney empire scrambling to disavow themselves of the tarnish that will surely stain the high and mighty has me giggling with mad glee. Enron has been the world's premiere polluter, violator of human rights, and destroyer of the Earth while also utilizing Third World regimes to do their dirty work, all with the implicit and tacit support of the US government. Let me quote from the superb "Censored 2001"...

"Enron has called on the state of India to suppress and silence environmental opposition to their Dabhol power project, the largest power plant in the world. Enron paid local police to silence, imprison, and assault more than 3,000 protesters.... The mainstream media...has well nigh ignored Enron's environmental and human rights activities, even domestically. In a flagrant disregard for environmental issues, the company is allowed to continue to operate a highly polluting Houston methanol plant because of a grandfather clause in the 1971 Texas Clean Air Act that former Texas governor and now-President George W. Bush extended in 1999. Enron was the biggest financial backer of the Bush campaign—which does not bode well for the future regulation of the petroleum industry abroad."

So, as you can see, Enron is right up there with the worst examples of American democracy. Thanks to Mimi for doing a great job of covering the most important and recent issues possible, but always rememeber that there are other things going on, too.

Furthermore, let's not abdicate our own responsibility to keep ourselves informed. With the advent of the internet, bad or good, it can't be denied that there is a vast wealth of information out there. Many public libraries and nearly all schools provide internet access. There is no excuse other than laziness and apathy not to educate ourselves.

So I guess that concludes my ranting and raving for now. Anyone who wants to write is welcome and encouraged to do so. Although I am a prisoner, our DOC still allows us to receive mail from other inmates. So if other convicts want to write, please feel free. I can be reached at the address below... Peace, love, anarchy,

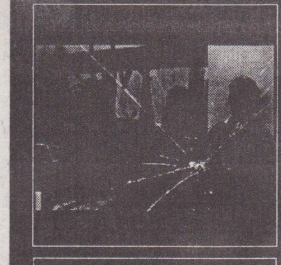
James Duane #214699/ Huron Valley Men's Facility/ 3201 Bemis Road/ Ypsilanti, MI 48197-0911

Hi MRR,

Thanks for the review of the new Suburban Voice compilation CD. One correction, though... I have a new email address, which is suburban voice2002@yahoo.com.

Also, kudos on the queer/gay punk issue. It was sad to read about the homophobia that still exists in many quarters of the scene, but also encouraging to see people unafraid to be upfront about their sexuality. That takes a lot of courage.

Al/ Suburban Voice zine/ PO Box 2746/ Lynn, MA 01903



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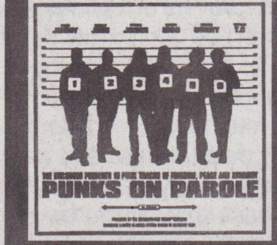

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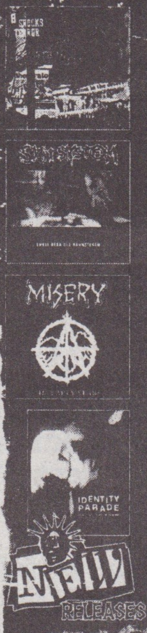

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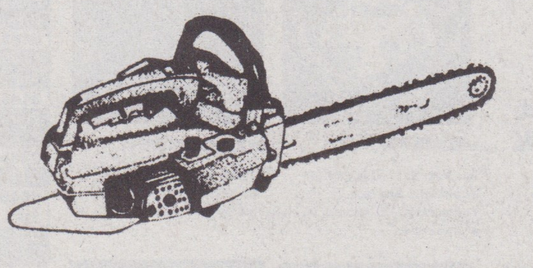

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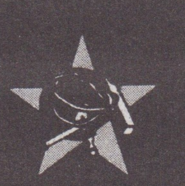

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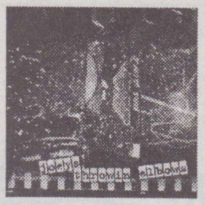

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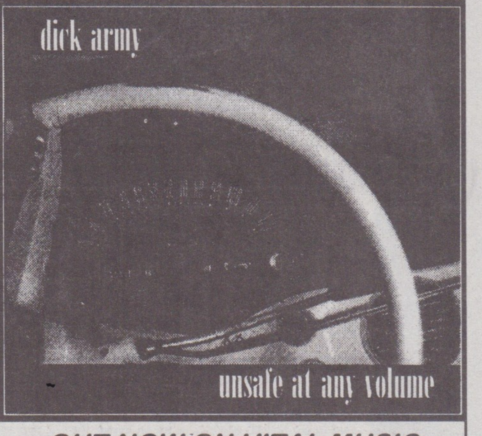

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COLUMNS

We lost a friend on January 12, 2002. Sera Bilezikian took her own life.

It's hard to write about, but I feel I must. I met Sera in New York. She started writing to me and sending me her zine while I was living in Richmond. She was a great writer. She considered moving to Richmond and at the time (several years ago now), I was so excited about the idea of having a friend here. She did move to Richmond, but sadly we never got close, or even got to spend much time together, because each of our lives consumed us in different directions and our paths rarely crossed. This was always a big regret that I had, largely because it was one of those missed opportunities that as it was happening, I knew was a mistake, and I really regretted that we never connected or reached out, or made the effort to make our paths cross. A year or so passed and she left Richmond and went on to travel the world and live here and there.

Eventually we came back in contact—she continued to send me her zine and eventually started writing a column for *Slug & Lettuce*. Just this past December she sent her latest and told me she was going to be visiting Richmond soon. I was excited at the thought of finally getting to spend a quality day or so together. Instead I ended up getting a call about her death. After spending her last five days in Richmond, she ended up driving North on the Chesapeake Bridge in Maryland, then turning around and jumping off the bridge on the Southbound side. I don't think that anyone who knew her well or who had seen her recently saw this coming. In fact I know that to be the case.

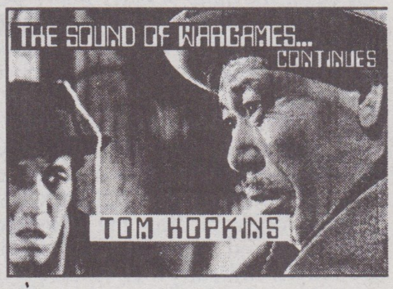
Anyone who knew Sera feels the pain of her loss. She was such a radiant person. So full of passion and compassion. She was a great writer and a dedicated activist. And I know that in her vast travels she touched many people. I think she was the sort of person who even if, like me, you didn't know that well, if you knew her at all, you felt a bit of her radiating energy. So I honestly feel like a light in our world has gone out. That we have lost an important voice. And I know that like many other people, I'm just plain sad and torn up over it.

Sera was manic depressive. I'm not sure that I knew this before. Sometimes things sound vaguely familiar without ringing a certainty bell. I have recently come to understand much more about manic depression through Sascha. Sascha has dealt with his own battles with manic depression and it seems that Sera and he suffered in many of the same ways. Sascha wrote an amazing column for the latest issue of *Slug & Lettuce* about Sera; about his own battle with manic depression; and about the blessing and curse that it is. This piece of writing is one of the most intense and important things I have ever read. If you knew Sera, if you know Sascha, if you know a friend who is manic depressive or if you just want to know a bit more about it—then I strongly suggest that you read this column. It's in the latest issue of *Slug & Lettuce* (#70). I'm not trying to shamelessly promote my own zine; in this case I feel strongly that Sascha's words can convey so much more about the situation that mine ever can.

What I have been feeling around the loss of this rad girl is the missed connection and the missed opportunity to have known her better. Especially because it really seems to me that we should have been closer. Our mutual friends are the best of friends to both of us. I have come to be confident that the friend of a best friend will most likely also be someone that I would connect with. It's one of the charms of our community—which over the years I have put so much faith in. Sera's death reminds me that time is precious. That we don't always have as long as we think. That time is *not* endless. That taking comfort in knowing someone is out there isn't nearly enough when you don't show your love, respect, admiration, and appreciation for those people. I'm not saying that anything I could have done would have changed the circumstances, but it really does make me feel the importance of reaching out, of seizing the moment, and really living *now*. Because we don't know how what will happen tomorrow. I have often taken comfort in knowing that people I cared about were close to me, or a phone call away, while going through long periods of time of not actually doing anything about keeping in touch with them on a regular enough basis. Time can be so easy to lose track of. So many things come to mind that could have, should have, been done... not just in terms of Sera, but of many people and situations. And of course, I/we do the best we can. We can't beat ourselves up for it never being enough. And I have really come to understand that being there for the people who mean the most to me—just spending time with them on a regular basis, or getting to see them when they pass through town can be the most important thing of all for me.

It all reminds me of one of my obsessive common themes of late, and that is the importance of seizing the moment; of doing whatever it is that we *want* to be doing; of really following our paths; of letting our dreams take hold and following them; of making them, or it happen; and ultimately of making the most of today. Also in remembering how to keep the lines of communication open and how much it means to support people who are doing things that you like, respect, and appreciate. Remember to tell them what it means to you. I think that all too often many of us feel unappreciated in our efforts and a few words of mutual support can make all the difference sometimes.

To correspond directly—write to Chris(tine) c/o *Slug & Lettuce*, PO Box 26632, Richmond VA 23261-6632. If you want to get a copy of the latest *S&L*, send a 57¢ stamp within the US, $1 from Canada or Mexico, or $2 from across the world to cover the postage. Chris(tine), Slug & Lettuce, PO Box 26632, Richmond, VA 23261-6632.



Three long-time shitworkers have left *MRR* recently and I wanted to make note of their departure and thank them for all their years of meeting (and almost meeting) review deadlines.

Raphael DiDonato has been with *MRR* for nearly his entire career as a teenager. Raphael started off with zine reviews and then began reviewing records. Raph is a fiend when it comes to overall punk knowledge and reviewed with an authority and enthusiasm not found in reviewers twice his age at other zines. He's off to college in Chico.

When I first started assigning records, Tim Yo told me that Brian Gathy was to get emo-core and some pop releases. I continued where Tim had left off, trying Brian's patience until he finally piped up and requested more rock'n'roll flavored records. About a year ago Brian turned in a WHITE STRIPES interview that I was stoked about. Brian's feeling swamped with work, bands, and the responsibility of raising two children (three, if you count being in a band with *MRR* reviewer Spencer Rangitsch) and is moving on.

Max Ward has been the lead reviewer of UNHOLY GRAVE split EPs since 1996 and also enjoys a moderate amount of fame and fortune for his import/export enterprise, 625 Productions. Max needed some breathing room for his upcoming release schedule, recording activities, and touring. Max has stated that this resignation is only temporary, but who says we'll want him back?

Thanks again for helping out *MRR*, guys.

Things keep on trucking here and new reviewers have been added in past months that I'm pretty excited about: Tim Brooks, Carl Cardova, Aaron Detroit, Vince Horner, and Max Tremblay. As for the other reviewers stinking up the pages issue after issue, would you please spell check and proofread?

***

Fans, detractors and casual listeners of the HATED are immediately aware of the homage to mid-period HÜSKER DÜ pressed into the grooves. Amped up folk ballads with ringing guitar and from-the-gut emotional antics. These elements plus a pleasing nasal whine and more development of the amplified and distorted folk backbone (a bit like NUZZLE) are the ten tracks of the PINE LP ($8: Into the Hurricane, PO Box 1011, Burlingame, CA 94011). The PINE's music and lyrics are so refreshingly genuine. There aren't any ceiling-staring hysterics or well-worn soft-loud manipulations with the song structure and no accusatory lyrics of woe with accompanying tired explanations. Buy this record, stick around for five years and all of your younger friends will be justifiably envious of this record, as others have been of the EVERGREEN and MOSS ICON/SILVER BEARINGS 12"s.

The PINE played in a Frisco garage recently and were just as fun and hip-shaking live. They played with UNDER A DYING SUN who were fucking huge and every bit as tight as their EP on City Boot, reviewed a few months back.

The TIDAL 10" (Incendiary, Stockumer Strasse 20, 47139 Duisberg, GERMANY) isn't a follow up to the LP of last year on Per Koro/Ape Must Not Spank Ape. This was recorded in 1999 and isn't as layered, deep, and multi-influenced as the current output. They were still Germans way back then, but their screaming hardcore wasn't of the SYSTRAL and ACME fatherland variety, but an early 90s MEREL style with metal licks. Also, none of the anthem guitar of the newer material. Still above average and I'm keeping the copy I bought. It's just a peculiarity as a listener to approach a band in reverse chronology.

I put off listening to the PINES OF NOWHERE EP for a while because the sleeve got knocked around by an ugly stick. (Level Plan, PO Box 280, NYC, NY 10276). Duh, I shouldn't have been so put off, especially considering all of the EPs I enjoy with poorly drawn Xerox covers. Two of the three songs are tight snapping rock numbers with nimble guitar legs. A mix up of the balls of early NEW BOMB TURKS and the quirk of Chicago college radio. SKULL KONTROL meets EXCELSIOR? The third song is a B-sides worth of bass swagger and guitar expansion, lacking the itch of the A-side. Pursue and consume!

I've picked up three LPs lately from a label that I've just begun courting, Earth Water Sky Connection (Vondelstr. 45, 50677 Köln, GERMANY). first in the parlor is "Blues Moderne: Danois Explosifs" by Denmark's LACK. Their huge, nearly operatic delivery has me blushing. Enough layers in the LACK's sound for a long winter's night. Can you believe I wrote that? Shit, anyway, ripping guitars put up against all the resonant timbre that bass and drums can offer. Ugly, soothing, frustrated and confused…many of the puzzle pieces of UNBROKEN, ACME (second mention!) and PORTRAITS OF PAST.

The next four young Earth Water Sky studs ready for messy lovin' are the SHAMPOO with the dirty LP "Radar.Rot." Actually, they aren't filthy at all. The sound has a crisp, clarion, nearly bell-like sound. Bright guitar and multiple vocals at slightly different levels. The instruments are dancing together in the happiest imaginable way, giving a pop skip to the rhythm push. Simple band comparisons aren't coming to the mind under these gray hairs. The first GREYHOUSE EP had an upbeat RITES OF SPRING influence, very early JAWBREAKER had a handle on meanders, and the first PROMISE RING LP Tweaked indie rock stylings extremely slightly. Some of all that just mentioned comes out of the grooves. There's a hairy nipple on the cover so Ebullition might not be stocking this for personal-political reasons.

And not the last Earth Water Sky LP in my torrid international foursome, YAGE's "3-17 October 1984." There are many bands that march the soft interlude to dramatic explosions of saddened, emotionally scarred guitar. This has become a tired two step for many contestants on the dance floor. Others have switched the steps enough so that this Judge won't tap their shoulders, offer a thank you very much, and point the way to the refreshments the ladies' auxiliary has prepared. Many flash-dancers from Gainesville, YAPHET KOTTO, and, yes, YAGE are in that number. See the well worn path I've tread in this review? I started by mentioning something that is bad (a tired style rehash) but then turned around to praise folks who had crossed a line in the sand, stayed at the Alamo, but found a way to come out alive! Viva rock journalism! Please, believe me though, YAGE moves their rich sound through ragged crunching guitar as well as rising guitar peaks of ANASARCA, GRIVER, and ENVY to smooth, soft, silent anxiety attacks and nervous breakdowns of whispers, low singing, slight string strums and drum clicks.

Six more YAGE songs are ready to be spun around on a 10" released by Code of Ethics (10101 N. Orange Ranch, Tucson, AZ 85742).

I have been listening to a lot of QUEEN lately. As I told Jeff, the 30th floor's word processor, they are so fabulously dramatic. So, I'm eager to hear what the bands on the Three One G QUEEN tribute comp are going to do with the selected songs. I'm hoping the BLOOD BROTHERS can capture the total grasp for hope clear out of reach that I hear in the bridge of "Under Pressure." (I am far from confidant that I'm using the musical term "bridge" correctly.)

Indie-rockin' good times of the KILL CREEK "Colors of Hope" LP (Second Nature, PO Box 11543, Kansas City, MO 64138). Slowed down SUPERCHUNK, less peppy TRUSTY but the strong melodies and harmonizing of both. There's even the slightest trace of alt-country, but this always passes quickly. Well crafted lyrics throughout. When I reviewed the KOLYA EP I mentioned a *strong* MOSS ICON influence. The impact of MOSS ICON's "Memorial" EP and the live side of their Ebullition LP is felt throughout KOLYA's new LP (Caulfield, PO Box 84323, Lincoln, NE 68502). Talking vocals, with peculiar nonsensical lyrics that rise as if in a heated argument between mom and dad once the kids have been put to bed. KOLYA cleans up the MOSS ICON influence too much. Musically, the guitar is dissonant and disconnected and passes through a full, steady, walking bass. this LP really started to drive me crazy half way through. The songs don't ever go anywhere musically and the vocal delivery drags everything further off track. Sorry dudes, I don't have the smarts or patience for this one.

The second AGAINST ME EP (Sabot, PO Box 28, Gainesville, FL 32602) may have some of the balls-iest (second balls reference) acoustic jams around. Winning combo of not holding anything back and subtle song crafting wizardry. I'm surprised there aren't any songs about trains, because the rhythm of these tunes remind me of a number of old tyme train ballads.

LUMEN's 5 song LP "Raison D'Etre" (Day After, PO Box 153, 35201 A9, CZECH REPUBLIC) shifts slightly between the high reaching guitar lunges and melancholic moods of ORDINATION OF AARON and JULIA and the rougher, screamed, lower toned French emo performed by JASMINE, ANOMIE, and early VANILLA. What am I talking about? Epic, crafted sound that sweeps into a frantic grasping for cohesion. Which is good, if you're asking.

The NEIL PERRY picture disk 7" is Witching Hour's (www.ebullition.com) final release. I've had a terrific time watching the slow growth of artistry in the packaging/layout of each release, which began to be as interesting as the bands Witching Hour has released. The wasp side of this EP can carry a screamo reference without any of the muddy production and non-dynamic tunes that the designation has become a warning for. Raw and expansive guitar cuts through a fuzzed bass that never gives in to the attack.. The nasty and crisp metal atmosphere rules. Side butterfly is nothing I've just typed, only one instrumental with no distortion and only slight tuning. On this song NEIL PERRY follows a soft rift to its absolute conclusion much like CALM.

***

A brief portion of my Saturday afternoons are reserved for "This American Life," a syndicated radio program which likely plays on your local public radio station. Go to thislife.org for more information. I mention this because while listening to a recent program, I remarked to Stacy (my wife/old lady) that taking in each hour-long program is 100% pleasure. From noon to one o'clock, thoughts of inept co-workers and shit-mouthed scene gossip are no match for the pieces developed by Ira Glass and his minions (at one time including Erin Yanke of the demo column and Portland Trailblazers fan club). I'd like to make an argument in favor of pure pleasure. I wonder if the pursuit of this pleasure might encourage those, in these pages and elsewhere, with urine-soaked underwear to stop boo-hooing about the great crime of this new century that was apparently being overlooked…BOOTLEGS! Pandora opened the box on bootlegs well before punk sweatshops began employing people to scratch/burn the matrix numbers off of MISFITS and BASTARD repro-boots. Are boots thievery? Yes. Often of poor quality? Duh. Has anyone had a knockout drug slipped into their soy milk, leading them to wake up the next morning surrounded by unwanted boots of over-hyped early New York hardcore bands? Of course not, no one drinks soy milk! Is this worth any further attention? No, with the exception of the publishing of woe-is-me pictures of tear-stained members of bands/labels that weren't terribly interested in repressing or reissuing the music in question. Encountering pleasure in its many forms might dissuade the punk intelligentsia from stands on such non-issues as…oh my…brand new American bands touring Europe without even a demo! While many Americans of the WWII generation may look to Europe and see a land of weak-kneed simpletons in need of the paternalistic protection of our God, Guts, and Guns, I'm sure those of us at this potluck are keenly aware that Europeans are quite capable of independent thought and the rigorous process of determining whether a band has met all the unwritten prerequisites for state-smashing support.

Get with the program twerps.

***

New CD in from Subjugation (PO Box 191, Darlington, DL3 8YN, UK), STAPLETON's "…On The Enjoyment of Unpleasant Places." I'm not too sure that this three piece has learned to enjoy the unpleasant place they are at as their music is a low-key, depressive take on the PROMISE RING and GET UP KIDS sound. Pop influenced but no pep to be found. This could easily be one of the indie-rock releases put out by Jade Tree.

I've taken a break from sniffing the bicycle seats at the local middle school so that I could listen to the new CORPSE FUCKS CORPSE CD-R "Demos 100301A" (3109 "C" Street, Sacramento, CA 95816). The last CD was a mess of ANTIOCH ARROW disjointed clatter, not destined for many repeat listens. The new tunes have the same nervous energy held together by loosely strung, clattering guitars, but sneak in some slightly dynamic hooks and even open up for some breaks that pass for melody. A quick 14 minutes and well on the way to being memorable.

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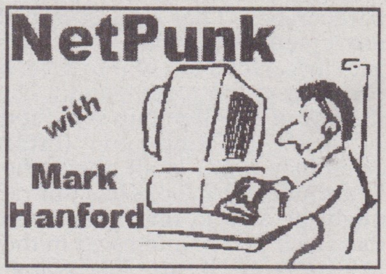
All items for review should be sent to PO Box 11661, Berkeley, CA 94712.



Another month of random websites with no specific topic. One of these months I should tackle the porn sites, just so those of you still in school will have something to do in the library on break. Oh well, let's get to it.

First up this month is a new website for Septic Death, Boise's original speedcore band. The site was created by their drummer, and is a great resource for information on this legendary band. You'll find just about everything you want to know here, and if you don't find something, you can always ask in the message boards and you'll probably get an answer from Paul. Visit the website at http://www.septicdeath.com/ .

Speaking of Septic Death, the Swedish band Bruce Banner has a killer cover of the SD song "Demon" available for download at their site (http://listen.to/brucebanner/). These guys actually e-mailed me about their site several months ago, but the first time I visited it wasn't that together. Well, they've got it now, with a bunch of mp3's available, bios on the members, photos, a guestbook, etc. These guys do hardcore right, so check out the music.

I have the feeling I've mentioned this recently, but I can't seem to find where, and even if I have, they've grown, so you really oughtta check out DIYauction at http://www.diy-auction.com/ . They have a bunch of stuff up on their auction boards, plus there are sections on DIY projects, and they run a distro. You might even be able to get your site hosted through them, so take a look.

For some eye candy, check out Bansky: Weapons of Mass Distractions, which is a series of urban guerilla-style graffiti images. Fun to browse through. Apparently they also have a book available through AK Press. You'll find Bansky at http://www.banksy.co.uk/ .

P0NK-111 (http://www.ponk111.com) is a distro, but the best thing about their website is their record reviews. They have over 1750 reviews of various punk, old-school, and hardcore releases. The reviews are pretty run of the mill, but there are a ton of them, and they contain some good information. The site also has a handful of sound files, some links, and a current copy of "The List" of SF bay area shows.

The next two sites had me rolling on the floor. That's because they are MIDI versions of your favorite punk tunes. MIDI files are those crappy sound files that use to be all the rage on websites - computer-generated music that sounds like it. Sorta like that Crass 7" that was all done on Casiotone, you'll groove to covers of the Ramones, Fugazi, Bad Religion and more. This shit has to be heard to be believed! Pick up a handful of files at either http://ifni.mididb.com/attila/ or http://members.tripod.com/~darkpunk/ .

I'm going to finish up the column with a half dozen sites from countries around the world, some of which you may not have realized even had a punk scene. I love looking at sites from other countries, checking out the local bands and photos, even if I can't read the damn things.

I've no problem reading thumped.com, as it deals with "underground Irish music... and stuff". Lots to read here, with several thought-provoking articles, reviews, photos, sound and video files, and a message board. And it all has to do with Irish punk rock. Cool.

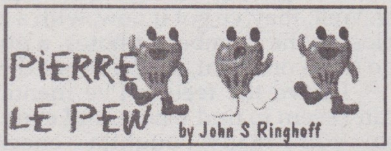
Kerpunk (http://www.punk.co.za/) is a great name for a site. That it is an online resource for the South African punk scene makes it that much more cool. The site is basically one huge message board, where anyone who signs up can contribute with reviews, columns, news, etc. I'd love to see more websites like this one. It really gives a sense of the community in the term "punk community".

Bataan Rural Decay (http://www.angelfire.com/id/hardcoreboy/) has a bit of info about the Philippine punk movement and some of the bands from the Bataan province. Not a ton of info here, but some decent photos of bands from the region, and a listing of releases. Maybe in the future they'll put up some sound files and more photos.

Punk De Columbia (http://members.tripod.com/colombiapunk/) is all about the Columbian punk scene. Unfortunately, it looks like this rarely gets updated, but you might be able to find some useful addresses and links at this site if you're interested in their scene.

To wrap it up, I'm going to finish up with Vox Wuhanpunk Chaos (http://wuhanpunk.yeah.net/) which is all about the punk scene in Wuhan City, China. Some of this site is in Chinese and doesn't display correctly, but there is a lot of stuff in English, and you can check out some pretty killer photos. Give it a try.

That does it for this month. Hopefully I found something interesting for you. If nothing else, give those damn MIDI files a listen. Woo hoo! Ok, gotta go. E-mail me at netpunk@diehippiedie.com or check out diehippiedie.com for old and new copies of this column. See ya.



So I just started working this new job. The pay is nice and it's in downtown LA which is close to my apartment so it isn't bad. The other good thing about the job is there aren't many of those crabby secretary ladies who are in there mid 40's but look like they're 80 year olds dressed up as teenagers. I've had a few jobs with these ladies. They wear trashy clothes, speak with gravely voices and if you smile or say hi to them they give you a look like "DON'T LOOK AT ME YOU LITTLE SHIT! IT'S LUNCHTIME AND I NEED TO GO OUTSIDE TO SMOKE 15 BENSON AND HEDGES DELUXE ULTRA LIGHT MENTHOLS THEN EAT A HALF A POUND OF CHARCOAL AND A FEW TUBES OF LIPSTICK! I LIVE UNDER A BRIDGE AND CHEW THE FUCKING BONES OF CHILDREN WHEN I GET OFF WORK!". So in place of them there are just a lot of people who I smile to awkwardly when I walk by and avoid conversation. The thing I really like about this job is that the person who sits next to me listens to 'light rock' radio all day long. Celine Dion, Genesis, that lady from the makeup commercials who does the "whoah-oh oh oh!" song, and "I'M....COMING....I'M COMING UP! I WANT THE WORLD TO KNOW! I'M GOING TO LET IT SHOW!' Yeah! That's right look out for me! I watch the oxygen network! I base my life around Oprah Winfrey's greeting card spirituality! I am unstoppable! But my personal favorite is Shakira. SHAKIRA!! Have any of you heard this song? TOGETHA! FOREVAH! Whenever this song comes on I'm magically transported out of my cubicle and into the world of Shakira! When it plays Shakira and I are in front of a bluescreen with footage of the outback and the desert and other WORLDLY places behind us. Shakira is singing and dancing and I am playing the pan flute section of the song and my legs are half cabbage patching and half marching. We march across the world inspired by the international music she plays. I wonder how many people there are like me out there. People who for that brief few minutes a day are taken out of their stale work environments and placed in a magical, mysterious world. Then when the song is over like me that are still staring straight ahead with an open-mouthed smile and urine running down their legs.

The funny shit about Shakira kind of music is its one singer then 30 musicians behind her using all those crap instruments you make fun of when you go to guitar center for whatever reason and while your drummer geek friend is looking at things you get to run off and play with the wind chimes and coconuts filled with beans that are sold for ridiculous prices. Who buys this shit? Well people who play world music I guess. I just imagine some band sitting in their rehearsal space practicing a song over and over again and they're getting frustrated. "God Damnitt! What the F is this song missing!? I can't place my finger on it! I have a feeling of what it needs but I don't think we can find it here! We need some kind of world music instrument!" so they go down to the guitar shop and the one member who is the HEART of the band goes around and rattles different things next to his ear. A half hour later he picks up a goat horn filled with dried deer shit and up to his ear it goes. He gets an expression on his face as if he's just seen a boobs for the first time and he knows THIS IS THE SOUND HE IS LOOKING FOR. "Hey. Guys. I got it." They go back to practice and when the drummer clicks off the goat horn is put to the test. The members all say nothing but nod their heads and give each other shit eating grins because they knew they HAD IT.

Oh I rented Wet Hot American Summer about 3 times this month. That is the best movie I've seen in years. It's set in a summer camp in 1981 and makes fun of 80's get laid comedies. Only it's not like fucking shitty American Pie or a badly overdone spoof. It's done so well that if you're one of those people who doesn't get real humor you won't understand the satire in it. My favorite part is where the guy steps on a bucket, slips on a banana peel, falls into a kiddie pool, then the bucket falls on his head. That's the kind of thing I could watch all day long.

Hey did anyone watch the halftime show at the Superbowl? What a bunch of SHIT. In light of recent events, this was supposed to be the most AMERICAN HALFTIME SHOW EVER! But what do we get? U2?! Arrrgh! I didn't know who was supposed to be on it so I turned the TV on expecting a 200 foot tall Uncle Sam to be shooting fireworks out of his ass and a parade of red white and blue boobs with legs dancing to funk music and children doing tumbling acts. But no. I had to watch a bunch of old IRISH guys playing inspirational songs. "Oh John. You're so wrong. Ireland can relate to us because of 'The Troubles'". BOOOOO! I don't care! I'm kind of upset that I didn't do what I did last year during the Superbowl. My friends and I said fuck football, watched tapes of ALF episodes, and made the world's largest hamburger with 5 pounds of ground beef. If you'd like to hear a lengthy version of that story you can write to my friend Joe Prichard who has an article about it in his "ZINE" entitled "F.T.W.". I write for this zine so do my fine friends. The latest issue is the best yet. I pretend to be a dwarf and Joe interviews a very drunk Simon Chung, king of comedy. For more info on it go to www.ftw3000.tripod.com <http://www.ftw3000.tripod.com/> . Well I guess that's the end of my column. Send me some records or something. 2743 Waverly Dr #9 Los Angeles, Ca 90039. jringhoff@msn.com

oh man,
what
the
fuck
?!?!?!
MANOWAR
manowells

I got a ton of work done today by avoiding this column. I setup my new shelves for the distro. I got some fucking laundry done. I answered e-mails. I packaged up 12 or 15 trade boxes. I even assembled a bunch of SOMETIMES WALKING / THE INSURGENT 7 inches. (I have a real love/hate relationship with record assembly. I loved it 5 years ago, and I hate it now.)

So, here's why I was avoiding the column. I haven't been doing well.

Yeah, I've been leaving work early and having brutal panic on the way home. I totally freak out while I'm there. I even missed a few days. I just wasn't able to leave my house for fear of total panic. This is what agoraphobia is and it totally sucks.

So, the last fucking thing I've wanted to think about for past month or so has been goddamn mental illness. I mean, that's why my column sucked so bad last month. I was in the middle of all this shit, and I just couldn't bring my self to sit down in front of my computer and face it.

It's a pretty shitty thing to feel powerless to accomplish things that you love in life. This column and my job are both super-important to me, and I didn't want to deal with either. And as a result I did a pretty poor job with both of them last month.

I think the reason I'm so down on my last month's column is this. When I was younger and dealing with this anxiety and depression shit the only stuff I could find to read were books and articles by people who were "recovered." I could never relate to that shit. Never did I find shit by someone in the thick of it, trying to get better. That's what I want to do with my column. I want to say, "Yo; I'm fucking sick. It's totally ugly; this is what it looks like. And here's what I'm doing to try to get better." I blew a great opportunity to do that last month.

Okay, I think that's plenty of whimpering about that. I'm going to use the opportunity this month that I blew last month. I'll take you through what it's like for me to get back and forth to work. Fuck.

So, the night before I go to work I start getting anticipatory anxiety. I try to get shit done for the morning before I go to sleep. This makes me a little less anxious about the coming day. It also helps get me out of the house quicker in the morning, so I don't have time to find an excuse to stay home. So, I pack my bag up, layout my clothes, pick out fruit for the ride there, make sure I have my wallet and keys, and shit like that. Since I started on my meds, getting to sleep usually isn't too much of a problem for me. I guess I'm lucky.

On bad days I wake up one of two ways. The first one is wide-awake with a nervous stomachache. This usually happens when I have already convinced myself that the day is going to be difficult. Waking up like this pretty much guarantees me some nearly unbearable panic attacks during the day. The only good news about waking up like this is that I almost always leave the house. It's like I know it's going to suck, but I usually just bear down and do it.

The second way I wake up on a bad day is just with brutal fucking depression and self-pity. This is probably worse than the first scenario, because there is a good chance I'm not even leaving my house when I wake up like this. When I feel like this, sometimes I just sleep right through the whole day. It's hard to find the strength to do battle with the day's potential panic attacks. So I usually don't. I just get super-bummed and convinced that shit is hopeless.

So, either way, when I wake up I do a sort of "systems check," like on Star Trek. I try to figure out if there is anything strange going on with my body that I need to worry about. Like if my stomach feels weird, I'll focus on the cognition of "What if I throw up and can't drive myself home?" all day long. If my head aches, I'll be thinking about "What if it becomes so bad that I can't drive myself to where I feel safe?"

Like, this past month I've been fighting a nasty sore throat. So, a few times I spent the better part of the day convinced my throat was working it's way toward being closed up. So, I was sure that I wasn't getting enough air, which was going to induce a crushing panic attack and possible loss of consciousness. It's totally fucked.

So, historically with me, getting places was always the hard part. But for some reason *getting home* from places started to be difficult part in the past few months. Particularly, this started happening with where I work.

I had a few really horrible panic attacks on the way home a few months back, and I guess I got spooked and made some associations in my brain about it. Because, now at about 3pm everyday, I just start thinking about how far away from my house I am. I think about how many traffic lights I have to sit at. I think about how I have to crossover the Long Island Expressway, and how if there is traffic, I'll just be fucked and trapped with my panic.

So by 4pm I'm in a fucking snit. I'm convinced if I leave any later than around 4:15, I'm going to freak out in traffic. It's not really rational, because the way I take home avoids most of the traffic even at rush hour.

So, for the first 10 minutes of my ride home, I am totally fucked. I usually have my cell phone on, and all my work friends' numbers with me. This is a sort of ritual I started in an attempt to fend off the anxiety. I feel like maybe Rob, Chuck, or Don can come get me if something goes horribly wrong.

Another mechanism I came up with is "satellite safe places." I set up little places along the way where I feel safe. Like, if I'm going to have some kind of emergency (or some irrational shit) I can stop there and get help. I've never actually stopped, but I guess it just comforts me to know that I *can* if I need to.

First, I pass this photography place where I had to supervise a photo shoot once. Fuck, I've been dying to put that in print. Anyway, the woman there was really, really, nice. So, when I come up to the corner where her place is at, I breathe a little easier. After that, I pass a police station. I feel like if I'm really fucked, at least I can stop there and they can rush me to a hospital. After that is the big intersection by the Long Island Expressway. I've had some pretty bad panic there. I cope with it by focusing on the walk-in medical center through the intersection. I figure, there has to be at least one sympathetic nurse in there. Finally, a few blocks from there, I pass the Church. I don't know why that place makes me feel any better, but it does.

Anyway, once I'm passed the church and over by this Wendy's, I feel like I'm in safe territory. At this point, I'm pretty close to my buddy Tom's record store. On bad days, when I'm still freaking out by the time I pass Wendy's, I calm down by knowing that in a real pinch fucking Tom would close up the shop for 10 minutes and come get me.

So that's it. The last 15 minutes of my drive are usually pretty uneventful. By this point I feel pretty drained. It's kind of like I've been underwater, coming up at my "satellite safe places" for short gasps of air. And finally at a certain point I'm above water again.

Yeah, so all that shit I invented for getting home is totally horrible. What I am realizing this week is that the more little mechanisms I come up with, the more out of control I feel. Because my safety and well being are always in other peoples hands. So, what I've been trying to do is move the safety back to me. Like, every time I start to use one of those coping mechanisms in my mind, I try to replace it with a thought about how *I* can get myself to safety if something really goes wrong. It seems to be working too. I've had a few alright days in a row.

Well I guess that's a little peak into that, huh? It's totally embarrassing and humiliating, and I know all that shit is irrational. But what can I say? That's what it is like on my way home from work. And shit, that's how it is when I try to go almost anywhere.

The really, really, sad part is that there are people out there struggling with way worse shit than me. I know it, because a few of them have written to me.

So, to the sick people like me, I have to say "fucking hang in there." And to everyone else, be aware that we're out here. I guess you guys just have to be as helpful and understanding as you can be.

Okay, so I think that's it for this time around. As usual, I'm looking for people to write me about this mental illness shit. So, do that! I'd like to feature some perspectives other than mine in upcoming columns, so get cracking.

Thanks for listening everyone!

MAN IS THE BASTARD is the only thing I listen to: Wells Tipley, P.O Box 772, East Setauket, NY, 11733 USA. Or e-mail me at wells@trafficviolation.com.

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END NOTES:

1. I kinda bagged on JAWBREAKER a couple months back. I forgot to mention that I am pretty big JAWBREAKER fan. JETS TO BRAZIL, I've never heard. Just on principle.

2. Yo, I gotta say hi to all the prisoners who have been writing me. You guys are great *pen* pals, and a real *captive* audience. Get it?

3. I misplaced the actual letter, but a really nice person sent me the address for a place that treats anxiety related mental illnesses in the Midwest. Here's the information: Mid-West Center for Stress and Anxiety, 106 N. Church St., Oak Harbor, OH, 43449. The telephone number is 1-419-898-4357.

4. DAG NASTY.

5. I've been thinking a lot about the idea of exclusive distribution in our punk scene. Over the past 5 years that I've been involved in punk it's become more and more prevalent. I'd like to examine the issue in an upcoming column. So, anyone with ideas on this shit let me know! Thanks.

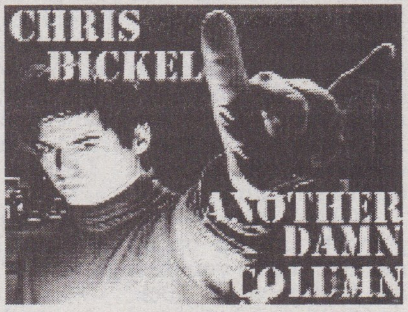
josé
palafox

2/5/02
Dear Mike, Arwen, and MRR readers,

I'm sorry to say but this will be my last MRR column. I leave not because of any specific event or lack of interest in the magazine. Quite the contrary, I think that what Arwen, Mike, and other MRR folks are doing is pretty new and exciting. I honestly feel that in terms of interviews, articles, news coverage, book reviews, etc., etc., things here at MRR have gotten better. I simply cannot find the time to write this monthly column. And now that I have passed my PhD oral exams, I move on to my dissertation (currently titled: "The Open Veins of Undocumented Workers: Enforcing Global Apartheid Through U.S.-Mexico Boundary Policing, 1992-2000"). I hope to finish in one to two years and then start teaching. We'll see how things go. I don't know what else to say other than to say that it truly has been an honor (seriously) to write for MRR. In an age where the mass media and corporate book houses attempt to mold Their worldview onto us; in a world where folks feel suffocated by old and sterile ideas; in a world where kids just feel like all avenues for communicating with one another are just not there; I say fuck it. Now more than ever is the time for alternative viewpoints through music, writing, etc. to challenge us into not excepting the parameters of debate and to continue asking the question: What kind of society we want to live in? I wish I could continue writing this column but with the little time that I have these days, I need to cut down on a few projects (MRR is, unfortunately, one of them). Not to sound so prophetic but, we are truly living in historic times. In a post September 11 world, what we do (or don't do) will have tremendous consequences for many generations to come. It was Karl Marx that, long ago, in a letter to Dr. Kugelmann in 1868, stated: "Once the inner connection is grasped, all theoretical belief in the permanent necessity of existing conditions breaks down before their collapse in practice." For those who claim that American Empire faces no challenges now and that it alone will dominate future geo-politics, I say this: American Empire is rolling the dice big time and, once we understand this, things don't look that cynical. There is hope in something else, I believe. Historically, crisis usually brings one of two things: on the one hand, opportunity (especially for those of us on the left) and/or danger (especially for the capitalist class). For all the fucked up problems that the movie "Black Hawk Down" had (to say nothing of the oppositional reactionary forces like General Aidid), the powers that be always underestimate the power of the people. Who knows where this current "War on Terrorism" will take us... One thing is for sure, this is a sick and dying empire that by it's own internal contradictions is creating historical opportunities. The question is what will we do? I hope to be able to contribute once in a while to MRR. For now, peace to the villages, war to the palaces.

A todos ustedes que leen esta pinche magazine, bueno, hojala que les alla gustado algunas de las cosas que he escrito aqui. Pero nosostros, como gente que habla espanol, tenemos que hacer nuestras fanzines y no depender en los gringos de MRR, asi que, a la chingada y hacerlo nosotros mismos, no? si se puede.

Al rato cabrones y cabronas, Jose Palafox (josefox@uclink4.berkeley.edu).



Part One: Drugs & Terrorists

The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) came up with a brilliant advertising campaign that was launched during the Super Bowl.

The campaign was designed to educate Americans about how money from the drug trade helps finance acts of terror. To quote the ONDCP's statistics: "roughly half of the 28 international terrorist organizations recognized by the State Department engage in drug trafficking, and many drug trafficking organizations engage in acts of terror, like kidnapping, torture, bombings and killing of innocents."

"Drug use hurts our families and our communities. It also finances our enemies. To fight the terror inflicted by killers, thugs, and terrorists around the world who depend on American drug purchases to fund their violence, we must stop paying for our own destruction and the destruction of others," said ONDCP Director John Walters. "As President George W. (The "W" stands for "who?-wha?-huh?") Bush has said, 'When you quit using drugs, you join the fight against terror in America.'"

One of the commercials shows a group of teens talking about buying drugs in terms like "I help teach Afghani children to kill." It's a slick and imaginative move on the part of the ONDCP to use the nation's newfound patriotism as propaganda against drug use. According to Representative Mark Souder (R-IL), Chairman of the Government Reform Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources, "Americans who buy and sell illegal narcotics are lending a helping hand to people like those who attacked America on September 11."

It's amazing that these lawmakers don't see the complete and utter hypocrisy in their own statements.

Who's more to blame in this scenario? The pimply-faced kid that buys a joint from the stoner down the street, or the government which criminalizes that joint? Isn't it a fact that terrorist organizations that profit from the sale of illegal drugs, are put in a position to profit from such sales for one reason and one reason alone: the substances are *illegal*. Here's a simple solution. You don't want terrorists to profit from selling illegal drugs? Make them legal. Take away their value. Don't make some 16 year-old kid from Idaho feel like he's responsible for the WTC murders simply because he toked a reefer. It's not that kid's fault. If any connection can be made between the events of Sept. 11 and the sale of illegal drugs (and who's to say that that connection can even be made?), then the fault would certainly lie with those that created the underground economy by criminalizing these substances (the US government, not some pimply-faced kid).

Furthermore, what about all of the terrorist activity that's gone on unmonitored because our police force was too busy worrying about that same pimply-faced kid and his stash. Steve Dasbach of the American Libertarian Party had this to say: "Thousands of innocent Americans may be dead because law enforcement considered it more important to raid college frat parties and arrest people for smoking marijuana than to find and stop the deadly terrorist 'sleeper' cells that were plotting the greatest mass murder in American history. You just have to wonder: If the tens of thousands of law enforcement officers, the millions of man-hours, and the billions of dollars that were spent monitoring, investigating, arresting, charging, processing, jailing, and bringing to trial non-violent marijuana users had been used, instead, for anti-terrorist activities— could the Sept. 11 atrocity have been prevented?" Anything the Libertarian Party says generally needs to be taken with a grain of salt, but Dasbach brings up a very valid point. If drugs were decriminalized, then our men in black and blue would have had more time to uncover the actions of terrorists in our own country. Who's to blame for the events of Sept. 11? The pimply-faced kid and his kind-bud, or the cops that were tracking his trip to the video store instead of tracking the terrorists joining flight schools?

According to figures collected from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Report, police arrested an estimated 734,498 people for marijuana violations last year. It's hardly a wonder that terrorists can move freely throughout the US undetected. The cops were all busy busting pimply-faced kids with weed.

The ONDCP's campaign uses fuzzy logic to get its point across. If we are to believe, as they say, that buying drugs supports terror, then wouldn't it follow that buying any petroleum product also supports terror? As easily as it can be "proven" that terrorists are funded by drug money, it can just as easily be "proven" that terrorists are funded by oil money. I'd like to see a commercial featuring a guy at a gas pump saying "I paid for the boxcutters that hijacked the planes on Sept. 11."

I'm not even going to get into all of the drug and weapons selling that our very own CIA has done to finance the very same people that attacked the US. That would quickly turn this column into a book. The CIA is without a doubt more to blame for the training of terrorists than all the joints smoked by CYPRESS HILL, Woody Harrelson, and Dr. Dre combined. It's no secret that the US government sent $43 million in aid to Afghanistan before the Sept. 11 attack as part of the "war on drugs." This enormous sum was sent in the hopes that the country cease and desist with the growing its chief cash-crop: opium poppies. One wonders how much of that "war on drugs" money wound up in the hands of the Taliban. The government would like you to believe that none of that money was funneled to terror organizations, but who are they kidding? Who really paid for those boxcutters? That pimply-faced kid who's experimentation with the dreaded "gateway drug" marijuana has lead him to snorting his first bag of smack, or Colin Powell? Even if the Taliban only got 10% of that $42 million, that still buys boxes and boxes of boxcutters. Hell, you'd need a box of boxcutters just to cut open the boxes of boxcutters!

To borrow a quote that we have repeatedly been battered over the head with: "unless we decriminalize drugs, the terrorists will win." I think the "Just Say No" commercials made a lot more sense.

Part Two: Reunions

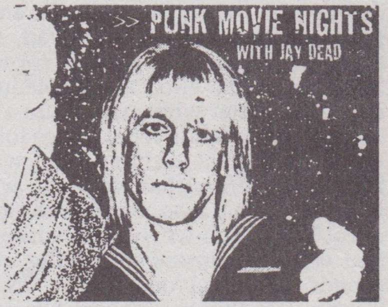
I am told that the ex-members of the DEAD KENNEDYS are touring without Jello as (could this possibly be right?) the DK KENNEDYS. Some of the worst punk shows I've ever seen have been reunion shows. I count FEAR and D.I. reunion shows as some of the most pathetic gigs I've ever attended. The DK KENNEDYS couldn't possibly be any better. There's something about bands getting back together after 10 or 15 years and touring to cash in off of nostalgia that seems antithetical to punk rock. That's not Punk Rock, that's Dinosaur Rock. I wouldn't propose an age limit on people making punk rock music (I wouldn't want to put Dick Lucas out of business), but I would suggest that anyone considering a reunion tour forget it. Reunion tours can never ever never ever ever be cool. Start a new band. Hell, I'd go see East Bay Ray's new band if they toured... but fuck if I'm gonna shell out any amount of dollars to see him play in what basically amounts to a DEAD KENNEDYS tribute band.

Part Three: DVDs For Cheap-Asses

I know that some of you out there are really into the bizarre world of Asian Cinema. Tired of paying $30 for import DVDs of Hong Kong action flicks at your local comic book store? You can order this stuff for super cheap direct from Hong Kong. I've been getting stuff from www.hivizone.com and www.coolashop.com for around $5-$8 a disc. They also sell VCDs (which are playable in most DVD players) for around $2-$4 a disc. The shipping is the most expensive part, but if you buy a few things it works out OK. At coolashop, you have to convert HK dollars to US, but if you're willing to take the time to do that, you'll be getting a really great deal. I just don't have the money to spend $20-$30 on a movie, and I don't mind waiting a month to get a box of goodies from overseas. I just wanted to do my civic duty as a fan of mondo cinema by passing on this information.

Part Four: Contact

I noticed that MRR's layout program automatically inserts hyphens at the end of lines sometimes. This can make things confusing with web addresses. Anyone needing to reach me can get me at:
smashismo@aol.com
or http://clubs.yahoo.com/clubs/guyanapunchline
If you see hyphens (dashes) in either of the above addresses, ignore them.



GREEN PUBES
A Film By
Anonymous Boy

If this column is about anything it's about queer punks, mutual masturbation, and voyeuristic jealous perverts who pepper the purity of a true love story with dark displays of skull crushing slapstick. *GREEN PUBES* starts innocently enough at a punk show where the band looks almost as cool as the audience, and where the music sucks, which doesn't turn out to be cinematic foreshadowing. Nothing matters because the guys barely need any encouragement once the new boy with the green hair, and green pubes, enters the club. There is plenty of bumping and grinding, some hurt feelings, and a little female jealousy and bewilderment by the time the boy with the green pubes chooses the local punk boy he'll take home with him. All of this happens in a frenzied series of shots that at first may seem a little awkward to the viewer, but the sea sickness inducing camera action becomes the necessary cinematic equivalent to feedback and distortion, qualities that a mainstream animated film would never even attempt to bring to their productions.

Once the two punks are back at the boy with green pubes' room, the film wastes no time in getting right into the art of queer punk seduction. Meanwhile, the kid who had a crush on the boy with green pubes, but who didn't get picked at the end of the show to go home with him, follows the other two would-be lovers back to the room as well, and he watches his friend and the boy with green pubes give each other hand jobs from outside on the fire escape, all the while cursing the two boys and of course jacked himself into a tizzy. The voyeur's cock is curiously smaller in comparison to the boy with green pubes and the kid whose cock explodes from the almost instructional sequence in which the boy with green pubes strokes his partner's swollen gland until completion, at which point there is a dramatic explosion sequence that is right up their with Eisenstein's baby on the stairs montage in *POTEMKIN* for drama. Don't worry because we are spared any clean up scenes in the aftermath of the climax, on either occasion.

Ghost In The Shell, *Akira*, *Final Fantasy*, whatever. *GREEN PUBES* is punk rock animation at its hardcore finest! You can see the entire process for what it is, and even for *who* it is at one point when Anonymous Boy's hand effortlessly slides in and out of the frame. *GREEN PUBES* is a must-see punk film, and thankfully the readers of *Maximumrocknroll* are not unfamiliar with mailorder as a means of getting products that you won't normally find in the evil chain stores around the block. Make an effort and send away for this one because not only does it epitomize the punk, do it yourself ethics we espouse monthly here in the pages of MRR, but it is truly an *alternative* portrayal of the scene when the term has all but lost its meaning at the dawn of this so-called new century.

Coppola Niebaum? Who's To Blame?

Sometimes I think back to things and people who once seemed so important to me and I wonder what it is that I could have been so impressed by. Really, it just boggles the mind. It's not that I no longer find anything positive in the work and ways of these individuals, but rather it's that their inconsistencies are just so much more obvious and frequent to me these days. Being a huge film fan since an early age, I was for the longest time hugely impressed by the work of filmmaker turned winemaker Francis Ford Coppola. I was fascinated with every aspect of his career and lifestyle. He, at one time in my dysfunctional life, appeared to be almost great for what he had accomplished, and even more so for what he was capable of accomplishing with every new project he undertook. It's true that the bullshit, grandiose behavior he exhibited might have given one some cause to shun him and dismiss the writer, filmmaker as an egomaniacal douche, but I along with many chose to wait, and worship in the meantime, for what he had in store for us with every new release. Success has that effect on people in this country, and it doesn't really matter what subculture a person claims to be a part of, or at least that is what I once told myself.

Even I, great admirer that I was, have to admit that the last Coppola film that was even worth watching was *RUMBLE FISH*. That was a long time ago, and yet with the release of each new film we, his former devotees, still hold out hope that we will witness something in the vicinity of the great promise Coppola once held. Instead, the best film by a Coppola in almost 20 years has come courtesy of his wife. Her documentary *HEART OF DARKNESS* was both a brilliant and frustrating look at the making of *APOCALYPSE NOW*. Brilliant as a film, and equally as frustrating because it reminded us once again of how great both Coppola and Marlon Brando once were, but no longer seem capable of being. The second best film directed by a Coppola in recent years was *THE VIRGIN SUICIDES*, which was directed by Sofia Coppola, who was the star of Francis Coppola's biggest career blunder of them all: *THE GODFATHER Part Three*. *THE VIRGIN SUICIDES* isn't great, but's it's decent and miles above more recent films directed by her father, the Robin Williams vehicle *JACK* being a perfect example of the atrophied state of this man's legacy.

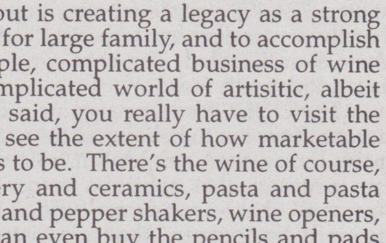
I watched a short news segment on Francis Ford Coppola once and realized that one of the reasons his film career might have suffered could probably be traced to the time and energy he has spent investing in the new family business of wine making. Since 1975 it seems that he has been slowly accumulating plots of land in the Napa Valley where he now runs a much respected, and profitable winery. He is also into the marketing of gourmet foods, and is co-owner in a handful of gourmet restaurant ventures here and abroad. Okay, so there is your copout for the lack of cinematic inspiration exhibited for the last couple of decades, right? I figured that at this point it was time to make the hour long trip to Napa to see the evidence for myself.

As soon as we pulled into the Coppola/Niebaum winery's parking lot, the GERMS still blasting in the car's tape deck, it was obvious that this place wasn't used to visitors that looked like us (my girlfriend and I), or people that only an hour earlier were recycling old forty bottles in the back of a run down Oakland apartment building. The black clothing, combat boots, and patches were in stark contrast to the lush palatial surroundings that greeted our hung over, sweaty arses. The other visitors there seemed to concur with our mounting paranoia because we received at least as many curious stares as any of the zoetrope exhibits on display at the mini-museum there on the first floor, next to the gift shop. The staff was equally curious, already keeping an eye on us wherever we went. As for us, we just patiently made our way past everything there was to look at, read, and of course buy. In spite of differences in fashion, we did try to blend right in terms of temperament, or whatever, which sometimes works. In any case, we weren't sure as to whether the second floor was open to the public. There seemed to be visitors making their way to the second floor, but when we started to head in that direction we were cut off by an employee. She promptly thanked us for coming and wished us a good day.

My impression after our visit was that perhaps the Coppolas and Corleones are not that different after all. Coppola is a capitalist first and foremost, and even though he may be disappointing as a filmmaker, I can see now that what he is really passionate about is creating a legacy as a strong father figure and provider for large family, and to accomplish this he opted for the simple, complicated business of wine making over the silly, complicated world of artisitic, albeit cinematic, integrity. That said, you really have to visit the winery in person to truly see the extent of how marketable the Coppola name appears to be. There's the wine of course, jams and preserves, pottery and ceramics, pasta and pasta sauces, books, t-shirts, salt and pepper shakers, wine openers, etc., etc., etc... Hey, you can even buy the pencils and pads Coppola uses to write his scripts! Not quite sell it once was, I'm guessing. All of it is so expensive. They even sell Coppola brand disposable cameras in case you forgot to bring your own, and of course that'll cost you like twenty dollars. Actually, it's very humorous and believe me we laughed and made smart ass comments to one another with each new overpriced product we came across.

"The horror...the horror..."

If you would like to send me me something for this column: Jay, PMB 419, 1442A Walnut Street, Berkeley, CA 94709, USA. By the time you read this column my website should be up to date, and so you'll be able to access old columns. I know you are jumping off the toilet after reading exciting news like that. The address is: www.wethepunx.com.



"If there's any kind of support you could give us, we would welcome that," Enron chairman Kenneth Lay begged Commerce Secretary Donald Evans on October 29. Lay was on a first-name basis with this oil-industry-owned White House, and his energy trading company was just weeks away from the most spectacular meltdown in American corporate history.

It's hard to believe that the Bushies didn't give a fuck about their pal's troubles. And it seems that few people do—63 percent of respondents to a CBS poll think the administration is hiding something about its role in the Enron scandal. In light of Bush's overall 86 percent approval rating, that's a big vote of no confidence.

"Our administration has done the exact right thing," coup leader George W. Bush says. He denies that his administration did anything to help Enron. One of the many investigations now gearing up in Washington may eventually lead to some smoking memo, but Bush is probably being truthful. When corporations give money to political campaigns, they aren't buying *future* favors—they're paying for favors they've already received. Once D.C. insiders learned that the Enron cash cow was drying up—so much for future contributions!—its Beltway clout evaporated.

So why is the Enron scandal a scandal?

Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill called Lay's phone plea for help "business as usual." The same can be said of the whole Enron story.

Aside from the size of the company, once the nation's seventh largest, the Enron story is same old, same old. Corporations routinely use offshore accounts and subsidiaries to disguise losses and avoid paying taxes. The fact that Enron paid no taxes during the last four out of five years makes for a tasty sound bite, but it doesn't itself indicate anything illegal—Enron, we now know, likely didn't earn any profits to tax.

Ditto for the company's relationship with its auditor, Arthur Anderson. Enron paid Anderson big bucks for its audits—and also for various consulting activities; Anderson's supposed independence may have been compromised. But what's unethical isn't necessarily illegal. Reagan-era deregulation permits such unholy unions. (An alleged last-second orgy of document-shredding at the accounting firm, of course, is a different matter.)

Bush tapped into the real cause for public anger on January 22, when he said that he was "outraged…that employees didn't know all the facts about Enron. My own mother-in-law bought stock last summer," he protested, and it's not worth anything now." Kenneth Lay dumped $101.3 million in Enron stock in 1999. On September 26, 2001, two years after his sell-off and a month before he called Evans, he wrote the following e-mail to his employees: "My personal belief is that Enron stock is an incredible bargain at current prices and we will look back a couple of years from now and see the great opportunity that we currently have." Enron, which had peaked at about $90 per share a year before, was then trading at $20.

It's always hard to see inside an executive's stony heart, and it will likely be difficult to prove that Lay sent that e-mail in order to con his employees into buying a stock he knew would continue to lose value.

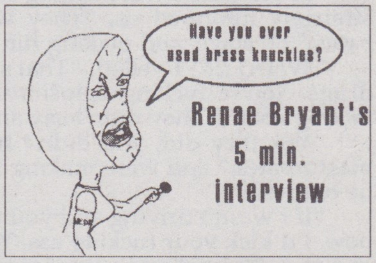
What we're left with is what O'Neill infamously described as "the genius of capitalism." One can't help but feel sorry for the Enron employees who lost their life savings when their 401(k)s headed south, but stockholders have never been created equally. The CEOs who make their company's decisions and spend their days poring over its books will always be first to know when to sell, and they'll fare the best in the end. In second place, obsessive market-watchers who spend every waking second hitting the reload button on the financial wires. Dead last: the poor losers who work for a living, buy their employer's stock to seem loyal, and hope for the best. These fine upstanding folks are mere roadkill for the high-flying raptors of capitalism.

If Americans don't like this arrangement, they ought to press Congress for a return to the golden days of U.S. economic security. From World War II through the '70s, workers weren't expected to invest in the securities markets, nor was money deducted from their paychecks for their "retirement accounts." True, employer-managed pension funds were sometimes raided by unscrupulous employers, but the fact is they succeeded in retiring two generations of Americans into condos in Florida and Arizona. Few of us will do as well, no matter how cannily we split our 401(k)s between aggressive and conservative-growth mutual funds.

Enron employees also earned public sympathy for the way they were unceremoniously fired, but cold-blooded execution is standard operating procedure in the corporate world. All the benign patriarchs are dead; today's bosses are slave-drivers. They use you up and throw you away when they're done with you. I'll never forget the way my best friend was canned when his highly-profitable employer, the E.F. Hutton brokerage firm, was acquired by Shearson Lehman Brothers during the '80s. Hutton had its workers gather in a ballroom in a World Trade Center hotel. Its CEO walked up to a microphone and announced: "If you can hear my voice, you're fired." The newly downsized weren't even allowed to return to their offices to gather their personal possessions. Between 1987 and 1992, 15 million more Americans lost their jobs to further line the pockets of callous, obscenely overpaid CEOs.

And this kind of thing has been going on for longer than two decades: it's not news. But Enron's very public demise may draw attention to mainstream traditions of corporate abuse. It's strange, but better late than never.

P.S. My new book, TO AFGHANISTAN AND BACK, is coming out in April. I was one of 45 journalists to enter Afghanistan in a convoy in November 2001. 42 of us made it back. This book is about surviving that ordeal, and it's 112 pages of which 50 pages is a graphic novel and the rest is articles I filed from Afghanistan. There are also tons of photos and cartoons. If you want a copy of TO AFGHANISTAN AND BACK signed by me, please send $19 (includes shipping to anywhere in the US) to: Ted Rall, PO Box 2092, Times Square Station, New York NY 10108. Otherwise, if you don't give a shit about my signature, no problem—it's available at the store.


Have you ever used brass knuckles?
Renae Bryant's 5 min. interview

Back in September 2001 we (All Or Nothing HC) left on a short tour up through northern California to Portland, Oregon and back down the coast. I love touring. I love everything about it. I love meeting all the people, especially the kids. I even love the stress (in a real sadomasochistic fashion). I made up my mind that with the new line-up of All Or Nothing HC (started March 2001), we would tour as much as teaching and graduate school would allow. This meant touring on my off-track months, around my exam schedule. We did a short northern California tour in May 2001 and then the prior mentioned tour in September. Now, when I got the new line-up the only two rules of the band were: 1) you have to be able to tour and 2) no drug use anywhere around me, specifically no drugs are allowed in my van. (You see, in 1999 I traded in my Nissan truck and bought a used 1994 Chevrolet Astro Van, the original soccer mom-mobile. The result is my van...my rules—fuck the rest.) Well, I started to suspect that one of my guitarists was strung out on something. Of course he denied it, then admitted it, then swore he would quit, and promised that he would be clean for tour. I guess I don't have enough experience (thankfully) dealing with addicts, because somehow I bought it. So, as the paragraph began, we left on tour back in September 2001...

I was obsessed and doing most of the driving and bitching. The guys were just happy to be on tour. The Sacramento show at the Capitol Garage, with Red Tape and Pipedown, was amazing. The tour was great so far. Then all of the sudden it happened. The guitarist, Jake, started freaking out, talking about taking a bus home, etc. We told him that if he left the tour he was out of the band. That stopped the conversation until we were on our way to Portland. We stopped at an AM/PM (or its Oregon equivalent) and Jake announces that he wants to be dropped off at the bus depot. So, first we attempted the coddling approach, "Oh, Jake, we don't want to lose you. You are like family. Blagh, blagh, fucking blagh." Then I get pissed. Now it's the bitch approach, "Fine, we'll take you to the bus depot right now, but don't think you're staying in this band." This goes on for a good fifteen minutes. Finally, the other guitarist convinces him to get in the van. So, we're off. We reach Portland and park. We all get out of the van and Jake disappears. I'm livid, but am trying to remain focused on my goal which was to find the record store I knew existed on the top of a hill in Portland. We finally head back to the club where we hook up with our friends from Oregon, Avalauncher. Jake showed up right before we play and has a couple of beers. I ignored him. Then we played. We hung out at the club watching all the bands and left when the show was over. Avalauncher had agreed to let us stay at their house so we followed them. That was when the real drama started. We all piled into the van. I noticed that Jake was wheezing and having some difficulty breathing. I asked, "What's wrong with you?" "Nothing," he retorted, in between wheezing, continuing in his thick Korean accent,"I think the bartender put something in my drink." "What are you talking about?" I asked getting frustrated with the situation. "The bartender must have put something in my drink, it cost like fifteen dollars!" wheezed Jake.

"What the hell are you talking about? The bartender didn't put anything in your drink, except alcohol!" I replied with the Ramones song popping into my head as soundtrack music.

"She did, and I don't want to stay at Avalauncher's house" he continued on. Now I get pissed, "What do you mean you don't want to stay at Avalauncher's house? They stayed with me when they were on tour. They got us this show and now we're going to stay with them."

"Avalauncher were talking shit about me on stage" Jake strangely informed us. "They were saying "Jake masturbates," on stage, and making fun of my guitar playing."

"WHAT?!?" I yelled. "That's it, now I know you're on drugs. You're fucking delusional. What the hell are you talking about? They didn't say anything about you."

"Yes, they did, you didn't hear them, they said "Jake masturbates," and were making fun of my guitar playing." he retorted.

"If I wasn't driving and you weren't almost dying right now, I'd kick your fucking ass. You brought drugs on tour. You're delusional and you're pissing me off," I replied.

"I swear I heard them talking shit about me in their songs" he went on.

"That's it, shut up! I hate you! You're on drugs. You brought drugs into my van. You're out of your mind and I'm not having this conversation with you any longer," I asserted, pissed beyond belief, with Suicidal replacing the Ramones.

We finally arrived at Avalauncher's house. It took twenty minutes to get Jake into the house, at which point he promptly passed out. I decided I had to be alone and slept in the van. We didn't utter a word about the whole thing until San Francisco. I decided to bust out the "I know you're on drugs and you need to get some help" speech. I felt fucked giving it because I felt like a fucking parent. I also believed it with all my heart. I had this feeling if he didn't get clean and sober he may be dead soon. He finally admitted that he was using again and brought drugs into my van. (This is a huge "no-no" because if pulled over and someone dropped the drugs I would be charged with possession and lose my teaching credential. I love teaching children as much as I love punk rock, so that can't happen.) We discussed it as a band and agreed that if he went into a "clean house" we'd stand by him.

As I related in my last column, we got back from tour September 11, 2001. Jake went home. Jake finally quit the band. Although he would never admit it, drugs were more important. Just another reason that I'm clean and sober. Too bad. As always, "When one door closes another one opens." We were lucky enough to get Paul (ex-Haulin'Ass and ex-Use Your Head) in our band as our second guitarist. Now we're a five piece again and playing non- stop. We record in March and will be touring right before my MA comprehensive exams in May. Should be a blast. So even with all the bullshit that can happen on a tour, it's still totally unlike any other experience. I feel like I'm in love when I talk about it. Weird, eh? I guess it's all that fantasizing I did as a little girl and throughout my teens. I highly recommend it. As with everything I do, if I can do it, you sure as hell can do it too.

Enough of the anecdote. The weekend of March 15 I'm heading to Vegas for a photo shoot with Justice Howard for *Savage Tattoo* magazine. You can check out her photography by going to my links page on www.ontherag.net and clicking on Justice Howard. www.punkgirl.net has been extremely helpful in getting more female fronted bands to send me demos for consideration to be included on the next "Put Some Pussy In Your Punk" compilation. I recommend everyone check out Jessica's awesome site. A couple of other sites I wanted to hype are www.diyrevolution.com and www.indiebible.com , which publishes a monthly indie contact newsletter. I've found both sites helpful. www.futureofmusic.org is doing some interesting work right now for independent musicians that I think more people should be aware of. Some bands I've seen lately that are impressing me are: Pillbox Terror (the voids' side project), downshift (www.downshiftpunk.com), Blind 5 (www.blindfive.com), Narcoleptic Youth (www.narcolepticyouth.com), the logz (www.thelogshow.com) and one of my favorites for their originality, The Super Zeros (female fronted anti-super hero punk rock). I'm still accepting demos/CDs for consideration for the comp. I need 32 bands and have about 25 now. I've come to the realization that I will not be putting this out until graduate school is complete, so I'm planning on a possible August/September release of the new compilation. The four band split cd will wait until I find four bands who I don't think will break up upon my releasing it. Anyway.

As always you can contact me @ PO Box 251 Norco, CA 92860-0251, webmistress@ontherag.net and www.ontherag.net. Check out my links, they make up for the fact that my own site needs a makeover.

Spending Habits.

ALL HAIL THE MARKET!
$
NATHAN BERG

I've gotten quite a few requests for the 'tips to avoid the strong arm of commercialism in everyday life' lately. But I haven't been able to dig it up, nor do I have a copy of the old MRR with my 'dissident culture meets the dollar' article (which was virtually the same thing), so I think it's time for a rewrite.

Through this column, and through millions of other sources, you should probably know by now that those who are in charge of our economy are not the kind of people you should be supporting. However, they are very good at what they do (read: money-grubbing) and this often makes it quite difficult to not line their pockets in one way or another. So, here's a list of simple things you can do to avoid supporting greedy corporations as much as possible. All of the disclaimers (read: "no, you can't call me a hypocrite because you saw me drinking a beer...") are at the bottom.

1-Avoid the unnecessary

It should go without saying that a large percentage of corporations make their wealth by selling products and services that are in no way necessary for a happy and rewarding life. From cans of soda to cellular phones to luxury homes, these non-essentials come in all shapes and sizes. Avoiding them might be the toughest step in living a life free of corporate intrusion.

The easiest way to do this is to step back and look at where your money goes each week. Pick those things that are non-essential and prioritize them. Now, look at those things listed on the bottom and decide if life would be so hard without them. In nearly anyone's case, it wouldn't.

2-Decisions, decisions...

This is a simple point to make in writing, but much harder to adhere to in everyday life. It involves making some of the larger decisions in life and how certain corporations will prosper depending on those decisions. For example, when looking for a new apartment, let's say you chose the 'cheap' one in the brand new subdivision on the outskirts of town. Automotive companies will surely be happy with you because you are now what they call 'car-dependent'. And so, when shopping for that car, if you pick the fuel-inefficient SUV, oil companies (read: George Bush and friends) win.

Again, this isn't the easiest point to consider when making big decisions. However, it will help a lot to ponder it briefly, weighing in how much money will have to be spent in the future (and who it'll go to) depending on what decisions you make today.

3-Anti-corporate

Falling into the 'duh' category, do a bit of research on the things that you buy and see if they're corporate. If yes, reconsider how necessary said 'thing' is. If it's frivolous, then you don't have to support this corporation if you'd prefer not to. If it's something that you do feel you need…

4-Find an alternative

For nearly every corporate product or service out there, you can find an alternative. Now, whether or not the alternative is a pile of crap or not is for you to discover on your own. Furthermore, just because there is an alternative doesn't mean that your money is going to a more deserving hand. Research your alternatives (or test them out) and see if they're worth while.

5-Buy used

Many of the things that you spend money on can be found used for way cheaper than you can sometimes imagine. A new car loses 40% of its value by simply being purchased and that's not the only situation where this scenario holds true. Thrift stores, garage sales and trade papers have a ton of cheap offerings and you'd probably be pleasantly surprised if you checked these out first before purchasing something.

I should probably also mention the concept of trading here too. It's true that one person's garbage is another's treasure so there's no limit to the amount of trash that you can trade away for some booty of your own.

6-Do it yourself

Now, it shouldn't take a brain surgeon to realize that a significant amount of corporate dickbags make their money cashing in on peoples' laziness. Whether its fast food, car repair, or amazon.com, most folks seem to think that they're too busy to do certain things themselves. However, ever little talent you possess can help aid you in your fight keep your money from the big guys.

In many cases, you'll find this to be very empowering. First, you'll realize that you can make anything that tastes as good as Taco Bell food simply by making a bowel movement, and it'll spread from there (no pun intended). Learning how to fix your car, cook your own meals, or build your own bookshelves are talents that are easy to learn, make you a more intelligent person, and save you a ton of money in the end. What's best is that you'll no longer have to pay some crappy chain store your hard earned money to have some terribly simple job performed for you again.

7-Sharing

It would appear that we all acknowledge and praise the concept of sharing, but rarely do most of us practice it in our everyday lives. Yeah, it can be as simple as loaning your friends and neighbors your books and CD's but it can go much further than that too. Want a new computer? How about gathering up a few friends that want one too and pitching in together. (Of course, you'll have to settle the 'where-to-keep-it' and 'who-gets-it-when-we-move-apart' questions ahead of time, but this can work pretty smooth if you plan it right.)

There are little (if any) limits to what you can do and save with just a small group of people. Chip in $3 each to buy a cool new book and take turns reading it. Gather up a small handful of neighbors, collectively join a CSA and share a huge box of fresh produce every week. If you think of it, it can probably be done.

8-Community resources

This is basically just an extension of the former point. Every community has resources available that you could be making use of. The most prominent and obvious is the library. Even at the smallest library, there are a ton of interesting books, CDs, videos, and (yes) records that are free for the taking, so long as you return them on time. These days most libraries also offer free internet access so you can mail your ling distance friends for free.

There are other community resources that are ripe for the pickin', even if they might not have quite as good of a set-up as the library. Plenty of cities have community gardens, where you can get a cheap plot of land and grow a bunch of flowers and veggies (or just veggies). There are also lots of volunteer options that'll save you money and get you into heaven quicker. Here in Madison, three hours of volunteer work will get you 15% of all your groceries at a local co-op; four hours will get you 25% off anything at the local bookstore. Don't think you have any cool volunteer opportunities? Odds are...you just haven't asked…

9-Investing

I write this point with a serious amount of reservation. Hopefully, no one reading this column has any significant amount of money invested in the stock market. But if you do, know that there are definitely some things that are way more worth investing in than others. If you have a serious amount of money and can't find anything better to do with it than invest (which I find very hard to believe), do some research and put it into something worthwhile.

10-Stay informed

There is no one single thing that you can do to keep your money from filtering into corporate coffers that is more effective than simply learning as much as you can about them. It's an ever-changing world and today's eco-friendly company can easily become tomorrow's Kraft subsidiary. Read books, ask questions, whatever you have to do. Yes, it's a constant struggle but no, it's not all for nothing.

OK, here are the disclaimers:

-This article is short and by no means comprehensive. There are a billion different means of keeping your money from capitalist paws and I can't fit 'em all into one tiny column.

-My points kind of assume that you're the sort of person that works, gets paid for that work and spends money. Of course, there are plenty of other ways to live that are no less noble. However, such lifestyles are definitely not the norm, nor will they be the norm in any foreseeable future, so I didn't bring them up. Therefore, all shoplifting, dumpster-diving, gate-crashing, squatting, and cooperative farming techniques have been left out. If you want more information on those, I'd suggest that you pick up Crimethinc's *Evasion* book and make up the rest on your own.

-There's no rule saying that all mom-and-pops stores are run by much kinder and more considerate folks than the assholes at Wal-Mart. However, these folks are usually more approachable and if you have a problem with something they do or say, it is pretty easy to just confront them about it. If they don't make any effort to change, take your precious money elsewhere.

In this day and age, no one living in the US (or anywhere for that matter) can live completely outside of corporate control. That goes for me too. The point is to find all the ways that you, personally, can avoid giving your money to those who'll use it to prop up everything you wish to see torn down. However, making your life overly difficult or beating yourself up over every tiny purchase will do nothing but make those in charge giggle and make yourself miserable. Do what you feasibly can and be content with knowing that you're making a hell of a lot bigger effort than most.

That's it. Write to me if you wish. Or, better yet, send me a copy of your brand new zine so I can start carrying it in our new and improved radical bookstore.

Here's the address: Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative c/o Nathan Berg 426 W. Gilman St. Madison, WI 53703.

What's Left?
"Lefty" Hooligan
http://www.huahuacoyotl.com

The painting is on the side of a building two blocks up from 924 Gilman St., and two blocks over from where I work. It's a picture of animals playing poker, like the kitschy one with the dogs, only there's a twist on that twist. The large figures in the painting are dinosaurs. They're decrepit—one uses a walker, another tries to cheat with a hidden ace while propped up in a rocking chair—and the dinos are pissed off because they're losing. All the chips are stacked up before the smallest figure in the picture; a grinning, furry, cardsharp mammal wearing a green visor.

It's a clever visual joke on evolution. It's also this column's central analogy slash metaphor for my usual discussion of capitalism vs. socialism. Needless to say, the dinosaurs equal capitalism and the mammals socialism, so let's see how far I can push this.

The logical place to begin of course is with origins. Dinosaurs differentiated themselves from reptiles proper somewhere between 240 and 220 million years ago. Mammals evolved from reptiles perhaps about 230 to 210 million years ago. Maybe 10 million years separated the origin of each, a mere eye blink in evolutionary terms, yet this was enough time for dinosaurs to establish their dominance. They filled virtually every important ecological niche of their day, leaving mammals small and marginal for over 150 million years.

Modern capitalism came into being in western Europe sometime in the 17th or 18th centuries, with the English Civil War (1642-49) and the French Revolution (1789) serving as convenient goal posts. Modern socialism can find its beginnings, if not in the rising of the sans-culotte and enrages with Robespierre's Reign of Terror (1793-4), then in Babeuf's Conspiracy of Equals (1796). Once again, the blink of an eye in historical terms between these respective origins, and once again the complete dominance of capitalism over socialism.

At this point an objection is raised. What about "real existing socialism?" At its height in the 1970's and '80's, "real existing socialism" included outright Leninist regimes (Soviet Union, eastern Europe, China, Vietnam, North Korea, Cuba), elected social democratic governments like Sweden and France in western Europe, and various forms of Third World socialism from Nyerere in Tanzania to India under the Congress Party. "Real existing socialism" was thus pictured as a formidable counterpoint to capitalism. Not quite the analogy with small marginal mammals against big bad dinosaurs, now is it?

Except that "real existing socialism" was never really socialist. This column is far too short for me to debunk every claim to socialism under that extremely broad phrase, and I've been taking liberties with column inches lately. Besides, it would get us away from the theme. You see, scientists commonly assumed until the 1970's that one of the most important distinctions between dinosaurs and mammals was the whole cold blooded/warm blooded thing. Indeed, it was a common argument in the 1950's that clunky, cold blooded dinos eventually went down to evolutionary defeat to superior, warm blooded mammals. The new orthodoxy nowadays is that dinos were warm blooded, either because of their sheer size as happens with very large fish like tuna, or because they were part and parcel of the evolutionary line that produced present day birds. Whatever the case, dinos were agile, voracious *and* warm blooded, and dinos kept mammals in line for so long because they were the far superior predators. The important difference between dinosaurs and mammals was not their blood temperature.

In the same way, the main difference between capitalist and real existing socialist regimes is not that the former operated by the free market while the latter implemented some form of state-centered command economy. As Karl Korsch once perceptively observed: "There is very little difference between that economic 'co-ordination' that is achieved, and sometimes not achieved, by the political decrees of victorious nazism, fascism, and bolshevism, and this new [American] 'corporate community' that has been created by a slow but relentless process in this country through the system of 'interlocking directories,' through the activities of the major financial institutions, through particular interest groups, through firms rendering legal, accounting, and similar services to the larger corporations, through 'intercorporate stockholdings,' and a number of other devices." You can read the rest of Korsch's brilliant summation of American fascism lite in my October, 2001 column (MRR #221) at http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. What's important at the moment is realizing that the US economy also operates with a command structure, and that it's all command economies everywhere you look. The free market is a myth.

Exactly who is in command then is the only really important question. A hint: it's never the working class. Most likely it's the good old international *bourgeoisie*, otherwise known as the capitalist ruling class. I'll leave the question as to whether Leninist-style societies are ruled by a state capitalist class, or some kind of new social class (bureaucratic collectivist, nomeclatura, whatever) for the anarchist-Trotskyist-ultraleftist debating society. Suffice it to say, socialism doesn't even begin until the working class organizes itself and takes power as a class. Not an easy thing to do, since it's only happened a handful of times in the past century and a half, always ultimately to fail.

Capitalism dominates the planet as never before, without even the pretense to a loyal opposition now that the Soviet Union and its empire have collapsed. Authentic socialism remains small and marginalized. The analogous situation between dinos and mammals was turned around after some 150 million years only when the sudden mass extinction of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago allowed mammals to take off and evolve to fill the niches abandoned by the dinos, according to current scientific orthodoxy. That orthodoxy in turn contends that some catastrophic event—an asteroid strike, mass volcanic eruptions, or a combination of the two—quickly wiped out our mammalian ancestors' chief competitors. This officially replaced various musty theories as to dino demise left over from the 1950's, among them that mammals (again, warm-blooded) gradually pushed the dinosaurs (remember, cold-blooded) over the edge by eating dino eggs, spreading diseases, and generally acting like pesky, better adapted vermin.

But wait, the picture is not so neat. There were major mass extinctions around 215 and 200 million years ago which wiped out the competition to both newly evolved dinosaurs and mammals, yet mammals weren't able to gain an evolutionary advantage on their dino competitors. Some paleontologists are now arguing that dinosaurs were showing marked decline as far back as a 100 million years, around the time other paleontologists are noting that mammals were showing signs of expanding and diversifying. Perhaps there's a grain of truth to some of those 1950's dino vs. mammal extinction theories after all.

This translates, by analogy, into a general sense of how socialism will come about. There is a catastrophist viewpoint, of which the vulgar Marxist emphasis on the "crises of capitalism" is the best known, which amounts to waiting for the asteroid to strike. Capitalism experiences periodic economic crisis—the business cycle of expansion and contraction—that will worsen over time until one final economic collapse ushers in a social revolution and socialist society. This reliance upon an apocalyptic capitalist crisis to catalyze a revolutionary situation is rooted in the notion that objective material conditions necessarily must precede and produce any revolutionary organizing or activism, reducing such organizing and activism to mere place holding between periods of materially grounded social upheaval. The whole issue of working class self-emancipation becomes an academic exercise debated by armchair revolutionaries, or worse, heresy to be suppressed by revolutionary bureaucrats. Old style Stalinists through Althuserian structuralists to the International Communist Current, whose members endlessly debate theories of capitalist decadence, are all guilty of waiting on social catastrophe to produce social revolution. Much like waiting for Godot, the final apocalypse never seems to arrive. Indeed, Marxists of this stripe have put off the final crisis of capitalism more often than the Jehovah's Witnesses have put off the Second Coming.

Typically, the polar opposite actionist viewpoint is found in anarchist circles, with its Marxist vulgarization appearing in left communism and even left-wing Leninism of a Maoist or Trotskyist bent. To Mao's adage that "if you don't hit it, it won't fall," many Chinese Red Guard during the Cultural Revolution appended the sentiment "if it doesn't fall, you didn't hit it hard enough" with their actions. Ernesto "Che" Guevara formulated *focoismo*, a theory of guerrilla warfare in which the guerrilla band or *foco* creates the conditions for revolution through its actions, serving as the motor force for the revolution. And who can forget the words of Michael "Bommi" Baumann when he was part of the West German anarchist urban guerrilla organization, the June 2nd Movement: "Words cannot save us. Words don't break chains. The act alone liberates. Destroy what destroys you." Analogous to the idea that mammals drove the dinosaurs to extinction, this overemphasis upon the grassroots power of people to initiate a revolutionary situation through their activity and organization against the monolithic power of capital and the state is problematic, to say the least. The effort to mobilize people to achieve change necessarily raises hopes and expectations even when it doesn't sweep away its participants in utopian reverie. Yet most such efforts, if they don't fail outright, gain so little in comparison to their visionary goals that burnout, disillusionment and wholesale retreat almost invariably follow.

My sympathies are squarely with the actionist perspective, though I do understand that it's a dialectical combination of objective material conditions and subjective human efforts that produces social revolution and constructs socialism. Similarly, it was probably a combination of evolutionary advances by mammals and worldwide natural catastrophe that did in the dinosaurs. This analogy comparing the growth and extinction of capitalism versus socialism in the political arena to dinosaurs versus mammals in the evolutionary realm, while extremely useful, is still pretty diffuse and abstract. Getting down to cases with, for instance, the ups and downs of the American Left over the past century and a half first reveals a variety of social conditions that allowed the Left to prosper at different times. From the end of the Civil War to the first World War it was the wholesale transformation of US society with its consequent dislocations caused by rampant capitalist industrialization. Then there was the devastating bust in capitalism's boom-and-bust cycle played out during the Great Depression prior to the second World War. Finally, there's the deepening quagmire of US military intervention in southeast Asia during the 1960's. While these very different social crises nurtured the American Left, a rather singular cause accounted for the "mass extinctions" that decimated it. From 1919, a juggernaut of capitalist and state repression known as the Palmer Red Scare attempted to crush a Left that had only gained strength during the first World War. The same cabal of forces unleashed another wave of repression after 1947 against a Left grown influential with the second World War, culminating in the McCarthy Red Scare.

Each red scare, in virtually wiping out the Left of its day, permitted the eventual resurgence of a new Left, culminating in the rise of the 1960's New Left after McCarthyism. This reborn Left degenerated from the initial spark of participatory democracy to a plethora of Leninist vanguards and social democratic movements, recapitulating the historical Left's twin idiocies under an up-to-date guise. Resurgent Trotskyism, a Maoist new communist movement, various electoral third party movements and numerous efforts to move the Democratic Party to the left; the already musty New Left was met by capital and state, not with a full-on purge, but with a combination of repression and co-optation that weakened the Left sufficiently to permit it to more or less wither on the vine from more natural causes.

(A substantial residue of the old Left—dominated by the Communist Party-USA and old school pacifist and social democratic organizations—survived McCarthyism to organize alongside this prematurely aged New Left. A minority libertarian tendency of Diggers, Yippies, White Panthers and other anarchic elements—to include a faction of the Weather Underground—also existed in the '60's; a product of melding the New Left with the hippie counterculture. These folks grabbed some media attention in their day, but even with more conventional anarchist types like the Social Revolutionary Anarchist Federation, they were rather marginal on an overall Left that was itself peripheral in American society.)

From the FBI's CoIntelPro to LBJ's Great Society, the '60's Left was rolled back enough so that other social factors helped it to "wither away." The exact process of this withering away is worth noting, covering as it does two mini "die offs." Kevin Coogan describes the first of these in his exposé on the International Action Center: "With the end of the Vietnam War, however, the entire American Left began to suffer an enormous downturn… The cadre-based Left was further weakened by the rise of new social movements like women's liberation, gay liberation, and the anti-nuclear and ecology movements, all of which operated organizationally and ideologically outside the traditional framework of orthodox Marxism, much less that of authoritarian Marxist-Leninist sects."

Given that opposition to the Vietnam War was so pivotal to the growth of the '60's Left to begin with, its crisis upon the war's end comes as no surprise. But that's only half the dynamic. The new social movements of the 1970's and '80's described by Coogan as so detrimental to the cadre-based Left would not have arisen without the social tumult of the '60's, of which the cadre-based Left was an important part. The attempt by these new social movements to open up new social and cultural spaces, while "organizationally and ideologically outside the traditional framework of orthodox Marxism," nevertheless served to open up promising arenas for all sorts of Leftist recruitment and organizing. Coogan has made a career of pointing up how Third Positionists and other neo-fascist tendencies are also exploiting alternative lifestyles and movements of contestation with demands for animal liberation, deep ecology and revolutionary national self-determination. On balance though, new social movements have always favored the Left. The Left could never dominate these movements as it did the anti-Vietnam War movement. But the rise of new social movements helped the '60's Left make a modest comeback by the 1980's—particularly around anti-nuclear, anti-apartheid and anti-interventionist issues—and continues to provide fertile ground for leftist efforts to this day.

Now personally, I despise the cross-class identity politics and post-modernist thinking so pervasive in these new social movements. Yet I acknowledge their leftist kinship as part of their origin through the overall dynamic as the Vietnam War wound down. Call it a mini die-off, or a crisis of the Left; this pattern is repeated with the demise of the Soviet Union and its empire from 1989 to 1991. The entire American Left suffered an enormous downturn, yet the seeds were planted for another social movement that some have claimed is a dynamic meta-social movement. The demise of capitalism's official opposition was heralded with claims that history had ended, not to mention calls to globalize the marketplace. The fertile anti-globalization movement had its coming out party in Seattle in November/December 1999, and since then it's proven to be the umbrella movement *par excellence*. The orthodox Leninist/social democratic Left has had little overall influence in the anti-globalization movement despite concerted efforts to gain it, like the Socialist Workers Party fronting Globalize Resistance in Britain. That's why the "authoritarian Marxist-Leninist sects" of a much withered "cadre-based Left" seized upon their old stomping ground, the anti-war movement after September 11, ostensibly to show the rest of us how to correctly organize a protest movement, thereby condemning the anti-war movement to "bitter inconsequence." (Thank you, Todd Gitlin!) It's also why the new fascists on the block won't get much of a toehold either in the anti-globalization movement, *contra* Coogan.

(The anti-globalization movement also marks the triumph of anarchism, at least in the realm of direct action. The direct action anti-nuclear movement of the 1970's and '80's took the anarchist affinity group concept of the '60's, made it consensus based, fleshed it out with networks of hubs and spokes and created an ultrademocratic model of nonviolent civil disobedience that spread from the Seabrook nuclear plant occupations to virtually every expression of pacifist direct action since. The Ruckus Society and Direct Action Network are merely its latest manifestations. Combine this with the swift rise of the Anarchist Black Bloc—an ad hoc affinity organization with greater autonomy given the small group practicing more violent forms of direct action—as well as anarchical Overalls of various colors and these days anarchism is proving to be the most dynamic sector of what's left of the Left.)

That Leninoid fucks like the Workers World Party on a national level and the International Socialist Organization on the student level are strangling the anti-war movement is the bad news. The good news is that the anti-globalization movement appears to be alive and well, if the protests against the World Economic Forum in NYC and Brazil (and in Munich against NATO) at the beginning of February 2002 are any indication. I could spend many more column inches praising the anti-WEF actions, noting the restraint of the Black Bloc, and generally applauding this modest return of anti-capitalist activism after 9/11. We'd be straying from this column's central theme though, an analogy slash metaphor that's become window dressing of late, in case you hadn't noticed. No amount of equating leftist crisis with ecological die off will change that. The comparison actually started to fray when I lumped "real existing socialism" into the dinosaur category.

Not that it couldn't have been technically accurate. There were several related orders of reptiles that weren't dinosaurs but that held their own with the dinos, and that were all different from mammals. Most of the flying reptiles were actually pterosaurs, while marine reptiles were plesiosaurs, mosasaurs or ichthyosaurs. I could have convoluted the story by making a point-by-point match up between democratic capitalism, fascism, social democracy and Leninism, and these various reptile groupings to emphasize that while the social systems in question are different from each other, on some level they're fundamentally the same while being radically different from true socialism. Instead, I was vague and imprecise in my categorization, risking simplifying left communism's nuanced position into the vulgar viewpoint that sees all existing regimes as capitalist and contends that all forms of capitalist rule are equally reprehensible. Thus the United States, the old Soviet Union, and long gone Nazi Germany are seen as essentially equivalent. The absurdity of this "malignant equivalence" should be obvious, if for no other reason than that most American radicals making such an equation would shit their pants at the prospect of having to live in a hardcore Leninist or fascist society.

Being conscious of when differences really make a difference is how the left of the Left avoids this oversimplification. "I am against imperialism, be it French, British, US or Chinese. I am not an 'anti-imperialist,' since that is a political position supporting national liberation movements opposed to imperialist powers." So writes Gilles Dauvé who, under the pen name Jean Barrot published an infamous pamphlet called "Fascism/Antifascism," the point of which he goes on to summarize: "I am (and so is the proletariat) against fascism, be it in the form of Hitler or Le Pen. I am not an 'anti-fascist,' since that is a political position regarding the fascist state or threat as a first and foremost enemy to be destroyed at all costs, i.e. siding with *bourgeois* democrats as a lesser evil, and postponing revolution until fascism is disposed of." This important if discriminating distinction has not prevented at least one group of ex-Trots turned council communist, La Vieille Taupe in France from falling for a reductionist logic that contends that the Holocaust was a grand if false alibi used by anti-fascists to establish the illusory distance separating democrats from fascists, that Nazism was no worse than western *bourgeois* capitalism, and that the Axis was no more guilty than the Allies of crimes against the working class. This ultraleft version of malignant equivalence has propelled La Vieille Taupe in an increasingly anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi direction, so that by 1986 much of its publication catalog could pass for a reading list recommended by Joseph Goebbels.

La Vieille Taupe pioneered an unfortunate trend among some left individuals and groups to collaborate, realign or converge with the right. After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, many nationally based Communist Parties in the subsequently independent republics formed "red-brown" alliances with ultra-nationalist anti-Semitic parties. Former Red Army Fraction member Horst Mahler replaced his Third Worldism with German nationalism and his anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism to recently join the neo-fascist National Democratic Party of Germany. This coincides with a resurgence in "left-wing" fascism (Strasserism, Third Positionism, National Bolshevism, Conservative Revolutionism, National Revolutionism, etc.) seeking to go "beyond left and right" and to recruit among disillusioned leftists. Needless to say, this coming together of authoritarian Left and Right is not a good thing. One of these days I'll provide a checklist on how to identify left fascism, in the process pointing out what elements to look for on the Left that might indicate fascist influence. Next column I return to the revolt against work for May Day, and this time I hope to do it justice.

...ALL THE NEWS THAT FITS...

YOU BLINK... And everything changes. Well, at least the mural I described at the beginning of this column has been taken down as of 2/18/02. Whether that's because the business associated with it is leaving or to renovate the painting is unclear at the moment. Not that it matters, since MRR is moving the headquarters to New York City anyway. I'm relocating to Brooklyn at the end of February. You can read more about the changes in the magazine in Mykel's and George's columns.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... You can find the "lost" Hooligan column at the new, improved http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

Take my life, please!
George Tabb sez

When I got an advance copy of Joey Ramone's new CD called "Don't Worry About Me" on Sanctuary Records in the mail, a chill went down my spine. Here it was, in my hands. The last recording the singer of The Ramones was ever gonna make.

When I saw the promo sheet that came with it, giving me the history of the band, and of Joey, I quickly tore it up and threw it away.

Who the fuck did they think they were sending this to?

Of course, on the top of the form letter it read "Dear

Editor" or some such horseshit. Fuck them. I saw the band when they started. I saw them when they ended. They were not some flavor-of-the-month band I was supposed to give a written blow-job. Fuck.

They were The Ramones.

And this was Joey's last album.

How dare they try to tell me the importance of a guy who changed my life forever. Who cares if they were voted Spin Magazine's second best band, ever. Who cares they are getting into the Rock 'n Roll Hall of Shame? It all means nothing to me. Or millions of other Ramones fans worldwide. We don't need the "validation" of the suck-ass music industry to tell us how important the band was, because they certainly didn't treat The Ramones like the Gods they were when they were around.

And now that Joey's dead, I hear him singing on car commercials, and being praised like John Lennon or something. Fuck it all.

We're all gonna die in the end, and thank fuckin' god Joey had one more album in him. And a good one at that.

His last album, "Don't Worry About Me" is, well, for lack of a better word, Ramones. Nothing less and so much more.

Starting with a cover of "What A Wonderful World" that begins with a over-the-top nod to the Sex Pistols' "Pretty Vacant", Joey and company take the Louie Armstrong tune it's pop-punk conclusion with a brilliant rendition recorded while the late lead singer was already diagnosed with cancer. To hear him sing about "Skies of Blue" truly tugs at your heart. Or at least mine.

The next song, "Stop Thinking About It" is like any other Ramones song off one of their later albums. Actually, it may as well be. With the exception of C.J., it seems the studio Ramones are the same as Joey's band. And with the production here by long-time Ramones producer Daniel Rey, why should it sound any different?

Next is "Mr. Punchy". With a "La-la-la-la, whoo-hooo!" chorus, it's more of the above. Not the greatest, but certainly miles above anything Blink 182 or Sum 41 or any of those other new so-called "punk" bands could ever do.

"Maria Bartiromo" follows. Yup, the same Maria Bartiromo you see on TV talking about the market. Joey sings in true Ramones fashion about how he has the hots for this stock babe, and wonders how his investments like Yahoo, Intel, AOL and Amazon are doing. Mid-life punk rock at it's best. But, truthfully, I don't know why Joey didn't sing about Rhonda Shearer on CNN instead. She's much hotter in that Monica Lewinsky sort of way, and the things you could to do to her with a microphone are endless.

"Spirit In My House" sounds like a song of The Ramones album, "Animal Boy".

Next is "Venting", perhaps my favorite song on this album. Singing along to a very kick-ass guitar riff, Joey complains about "a sick fucking world" and begins the tune with "Just blow up your school and have a nice day". In a way, it's very ironic. The Ramones big break came when they in fact DID blow up a high school in a movie. Now Mr. Ramone questions what kind of world we live in when these things happen for real. Brilliant.

"Like A Drug I Never Did Before" is more Ramones. Nice pick-slide, too!

Next is something completely different. An almost acoustic song called "Searching For Something". It has that "I Want You Around" feel to it, but with lyrics much more insightful that come with age and wisdom. Here Joey sings about Suzy (who used to be a head-banger) but who now moved to Rochester, where she enjoys the fresh air and the great out-doors. In the chorus of the song Joey sings about visiting her "I felt like a million dollars - something money just can't bring". Again, remember Joey already had cancer when he wrote this. It tugs at my heart. And my brain. I gotta get the fuck outta here.

The ninth song, "I Got Knocked Down (But I'll Get Up)" will knock you down. And I doubt you'll be getting up anytime in the near future. Joey sings over and over "Sittin' in a hospital bed, I want my life". Visions of him in that hospital bed have been the subject of many recent nightmares, and this song certainly doesn't help. You can hear the desperation in Joey voice, and, again, my heart gets heavy.

Next is "1969", a cover of the infamous Iggy Pop song. I believe the same version already appeared on an AIDS compilation a couple of years back, but it's great to hear it again. Joey Ramone has always been great with covers, going back to "Do You Wanna Dance" and "Surfin' Bird". But next to "Needles And Pins" and the first track on this album, this may be one of my favorite Joey covers.

Last on this CD is the title song, "Don't Worry About Me". Of course, with the world the way it is, and the way life just seems to work out, this is probably going to be Joey Ramone's biggest hit. Ever. The song is perfect. Kick ass chords that will haunt you forever, a title that makes you want to cry, and lyrics that take you by surprise. It funny how easy it is to forget that Weezer and Nirvana and zillions of others really just copied this guy and his band. Anyway, fully expecting the lyrics to finish crushing my soul, I held my breath as I listened to this song for the first time. But instead of Joey singing about how we're all gonna miss him, it turns out he's singing about some psycho ex-girlfriend who is suicidal and all, and how he has to say "bye-bye".

Quite a surprise. Instead of walking away from this album with my guts strewn about, I danced away with a smile. And with that smile came a laugh. Joey pulled a fast one. Here I thought he'd reveal the secrets of the universe through his dying eyes, but, instead, he just did what he and The Ramones always did best.

And perhaps, just perhaps, that's what actually crushes my soul the most.

Endnotes:

1. Seeing as Mykel and I are gonna be the new editors of this rag (read Mykel's column), I figured I'd start things off right with this article.
2. Thank God MRR is moving to New York. I always told Tim that the little pussies in California would eventually wreck the zine and scene. And I was right. Look at Epitaph, Lookout, and fucking Recess Records. They sold us out, man.
3. The $1000 dollars a column I USED to make writing this column was okay, but I sure am glad I'm now gonna get $5000 for now on. It kinda sucks that the shitworkers won't get paid anymore, and that we are now gonna charge bands for their interviews to run here in MRR, but we gotta keep up with the times.
4. Email me at aprilfool@georgetabb.com

[For those who don't know, as of April 1, Mykel Board and George Tabb will become the new co-editors of Maximum Rock'n' Roll. *Although this is the April issue, it's published in March. As of this writing, Mykel and George have not yet taken over. This will be Mykel's last column as a columnist. Future columns will be as co-editor. – M&A]*

Mykel Board sez:
YOU'RE WRONG!

I was more surprised than a lobster at a banquet. YOU'RE the party. Wowie zowie, do I have plans!

Back up. I'm on a large platform in some kind of auditorium. In front of me is a wooden lectern. On the lectern are some notes in large type. I can't make out what they say, but they don't seem important. The audience is all children, around 12 years old, naked from the waist up. Boys and girls, their faces decorated with Indian warpaint. One girl, her breasts just starting to sprout from her rib-heavy chest, licks her lips repeatedly.

On my side of the lectern, hidden from the audience, sits an oriental boy, his face streaked blue and red like the rest. I speak to the audience. Something about verbs. As I speak, the boy reaches up to my pants and unzips them. He reaches inside.

In the distance, I hear a buzz. The boy at my crotch fades. The buzz gets louder. The audience fades as I regain consciousness, awakened from the dream. Naked, I stand up, my hard-on leaking semi-viscous fluid. Eyes still closed, I stagger over to the phone.

"Mmmmm... wachawant?" I mumble.

"Mykel?" comes the female voice at the other end.

"You called to ask me that?" I yell. "I cudda got a blowjob from a 12 year old!"

"Okay, it's you," says the voice. "This is serious."

"So was that!" I tell her.

About this time I realize I'm hung over my late night at The Peculiar. I sit down, fighting both the headache and the nausea.

"It's Arwen," says the voice. "I called to tell you we're giving you the zine?"

I sit bolt upright, like I swallowed a Viverin.

She continues, "I don't know how Tim lasted so long. Mike and I have had it. It's just getting to us. We're trapped. We can't go anywhere. We get all these dorks calling to talk about punkrock purity and how Jane Shmo is ripping off the scene. If they were any shallower, they'd disappear."

I just listen.

"So," she continues, "we figured we'd give the zine to people who've already lived their lives. That way, we can go off and live ours. This is a zine that should be run by old farts. We're just too young for it."

"You mean...." I start.

"Yes," she finishes, "we're turning it over to you and George Tabb. You two can do what you like with it. We're outta here."

My hard-on leaves me. So does my headache. I press my finger on the receiver button, get a dial tone and call George. There's no answer. I leave a message. So far I haven't heard back. He might be out of town. If he doesn't write about it, he hasn't heard.

I hope we can get in touch soon. We've got a few things to discuss. We agree on a lot. The only point of contention may be whether or not I can mention Letch Patrol.

So, I'll present my ideas here. Keep in mind, I'm only half this crew. The final results are subject to the results of our editorial discussion.

FUTURE CONTENT:

One thing MUST CHANGE: punkrock punkrock punkrock. It's overkill. As thrilling as a clinging dingleberry. Of course we'll keep beating the dead horse, even though it's hamburger meat by now. But even there, we'll have plenty of changes. Take the photos... please! No more white smudges in a black square with a band name under it. We're gonna have photos you can actually see. Watta concept! And naked people. We need naked people. When was the last time you saw a decent zine with no danglies. I've asked Aaron, from *The Probe*, to take over as photo editor. He should straighten things out in that department, as well as between my legs.

And columnists. We need new columnists. Everyone and his nubile daughter wants to write for MRR. It doesn't bring money, but it does have its perks. It's gotten me laid more than a pocketful of cocaine. Until now, the process for choosing columnists was an arcane system of friends, punk cred, and who-knows-what else. We're gonna make it easy: the MRR casting couch. George and I will equally share the interviewing. No more hassles. Becoming a columnist will be as easy as generating a little friction.

Over the last few weeks, I've gone through recent back issues to see which ads we should keep and which should go on the BANNED LIST.

Holy anal fissure! There *are* no ads! Ad income is dropping faster than my erection when the carrot pops out. Five ad pages? A half page of classifieds? There goes the Mercedes and the trips to the Riviera. No wonder Arwen & Mike want to give the zine away.

Now I understand why the cover price keeps going up. Every year, you fork over an extra buck for the same old shit. Well, no more. Starting with my— sorry George, our— first issue: we're gonna have booze and cigarette ads. Only the indies, of course. No Marlboro or Budweiser. We'll have a full page American Spirit ad and on the back cover: BROOKLYN LAGER!

To go along with those ads will be booze and cigarette reviews. NO MAJOR LABELS. Shiner Bock is in. Heineken out. What do we do about Samual Adams, the Epitaph Records of beer? So much to worry about and so little time.

And the classifieds? The personals? There used to be pages and pages. What happened to the PEN PALS WANTED and the SEND $2 FOR CATALOG? Jesus fuckin' Christo. We're gonna get PERSONAL! SWF, BBM, GOF. You lookin' for people who like to get fucked with a cactus dildo? MRR will be the place to find them. Scat? Golden showers? We got it. Punk rock's been around for 30 years now. It needs a dose of Viagra. Look no further than what's in your hand—or what's in mine

We'll tell you where to go and what you get for your money. Massage parlors, private outcall, homo baths, what you need, you'll find here. What's more important, your vinyl or your dick/twat. Ok, you're punks, so what's second?

And color! We're gonna have color! For a magazine that's supposed to be left-wing, MRR ignores the colored... pages, that is. Modern journalism proves it's not what you say; it's how you say it. What good are great ideas if they're presented in a way that's so boring you fall asleep before you can read them? I know it's punk to look at the world in black and white. Personally, I wouldn't be caught in a coma with a spot of color on my clothing. Still, I'm a colorful guy. I got personality, pizzazz. MRR has as much pizzazz as Laura Bush's cellulite. Color will go a long way towards spicing it up.

And how many TOUR DIARIES can you take? Cockroaches, fights, drunk people, not getting paid/laid, how many times can you read that stuff. Except for a few mentions of Afghanistan, MRR readers don't have a clue to the world beyond their stereos. There IS a world beyond. Let's see it. So from next issue on, we're gonna have other diaries:

A hunting/fishing diary. Real stories about real encounters between man and beast. Tips on how to prepare venison, seal, pheasant and more. True tales of the big one that got away. Lure lore and casting rod reviews. MRR has always been a DIY zine. What could be more DIY than hunting and fishing? New color pages should really help here. Could you imagine trying to learn to separate the brown bearskin from the bone if all you have is black and white?

A suicide diary. Every month we'll present excerpts from the diaries of dead rock'n'rollers. You'll learn Kurt Cobain's last written words ("Hole's gonna be big!"), why Ian Curtis did it ("I thought calling us Joy Division would make me happy. It didn't.") and what Phil Ochs told his friends the day before he offed himself ("I ain't marchin' anymore. This time I really mean it.")

Diary of a peep show mop boy. *What a mess. I don't know what that guy was doing in here, but it wasn't just a splash of cum I had to clean up. There were thick brown marks on the wall. The floor was sopping wet. The TV screen was covered in vomit. I thought I was gonna lose it.*

Besides these additions, some of the changes won't be so obvious. Instead, they'll be shifts in focus. This being MRR, we'll continue to ban what we don't like. But instead of American Flags, pop music and Republicans, we'll ban the REALLY annoying things.

THE BANNED LIST:

Rule number 1: NO BANDS WITH "JESUS" or "CHRIST" in the name. That includes: Econochrist, Christ on a Crutch, Jesus & Mary Chain, Jesus Lizard, Jesus Chrystler, Christian Death, Jesus Crust, Christ on Parade and tons more.

Also, no bands with YOUTH in the name: Sonic, Reagan, of Today, Gone Mad, in Asia, Brigade, Wasted, Discarded, or Crucial. This is punkrock, after all. It has nothing to do with youth. It is very old farts, telling middle age farts how to run their lives. Don't you know anything? We're considering a cover tag-line: *not for sale to anyone under 40.*

Rule number 2: NO SKULLS. Skulls are for heavy metal, or Goth if you've got the trenchcoat. They are NOT punkrock. I don't care if you put a mohawk on it. It is NOT punk. Not in ads. Not in band logos. Not on the cover. Exception: The Misfits stylized skull that everyone recognizes as *The Misfits Stylized Skull.* That IS punk and we'll allow it only in reference to The Misfits, or on t-shirts of bands anxious to prove they were punks before Green Day.

Rule number 3: NO WHITE ON BLACK TYPE. The zine is hard enough to read as it is, but white type on a black background? Louis Fuckin' Farrakhan! Sorry to damn my predecessors, but how many times do I have to remind you of your aged audience. We have to put on glasses to read the Enquirer headlines. How do you think we're gonna make out 6 point white-on-black type. This brings me to...

Rule number 4: NO RETARDED PEOPLE WORKING IN PAGE DESIGN. I know it's being unfair to morons, but sometimes affirmative action goes too far.

Layout designers have to have some concept of design. The February issue had an article on FLUX OF PINK INDIANS that, guaranteed, NOBODY READ. How do I know? One design course, that's how. First year layout. Design 101. Nobody can comfortably read a line longer than 68 characters. It's too big of a strain on the eyes. Your eyes move across one line and travel back to the beginning of the next. If the line is too long, you have to strain those eyeball muscles. You get a headache. You certainly can't keep it up for more than a paragraph or two.

How long were the lines in the opening of that FLUX article? I counted to 105 before I gave up. Content shmontent. If nobody reads it, what good is content?

Rule number 5: WE'RE GONNA EDIT. Fuck this coordinator stuff. Coordinating is for camp counselors and cruise ship activity directors. We're gonna check spelling, capitalization, grammar. We'll make sure that when you put your grubby little hands on our new less-grubby little zine, they'll be YOUR hands and not YOU'RE hands. Half the MRR writers sound as if English is their fourth language... and those are the ones who were born here! I'm sure you've got something thrilling to say. A new idea that no one has heard before. Nationalism is bad. Religion is nasty. Globalism hurts people. What great revelations! Nothing any of us has thought of before.

But, if you can't say it well, then send it to HEART ATTACK. I don't want to see it. Write clearly and make sure you don't include anything on the BANNED WORD LIST: sell-out, capitalism, rip-off, sexism, womyn, grrrl, "hail from," old school, outrageous, Asian (except when referring to a non-human object, such as "The Asian Plateau"), the people (unless followed by a relative clause), workers. All these words are OUT!

Finally, review writers will not be allowed to use "sounds like" in a review unless what they're reviewing "sounds like" a band we've actually heard of.

This record sounds like a cross between 1980s era PIG KNUCKLES and a slower, more melodic version of BIN LADIN'S PUBES. Big help that is! How about telling us what's on the record.

FUTURE PROJECTS: MRR started as a radio show. Then it became a record with a zine enclosed. At one time the MRR empire included a radio show, a venue (Gilman Street), and a record store (Epicenter) as well as the zine. As the audience for punkrock, and rock in general, fades into rap and R&B, the sun sets on the MRR empire. It's time to plow virgin fields of venture. While we must keep our moral position, there's nothing preventing us from moving BEYOND punkrock. Here are some possibilities:

1. **Pilot's school for Afghans and Saudis.** Since Sept. 11, it has been extremely difficult for Afghans and Saudi— as well as anyone else with a turban and beard— to enroll in a flying school. That is blatant discrimination and needs to be fixed. We can do that with affirmative action in the *MRR Islamic School of Pilotry.*

2. **Sex Workers' Hall of Fame:** Gypsy Rose Lee is the only sex worker with national notoriety, and she's been dead for almost half a century. What about the *Ron Jeremy Shlub Award?* The *Chesty Morgan Top That Plaque* The Amber Lynn *How Did I Get All That In My Little Mouth Display*? The Sharon Mitchell *If I Were Any Butcher I'd Be A Boy— and Just As Sexy Medal?* The Peter North *I Can Hit The Ceiling Stain Chart?* The *Tom Byron Finally A Decent Looking Guy In Het Porn Trophy?* And hundreds of other awards, memorabilia and semen spills in porn history. We need to build a place for all this. I suggest Amsterdam, where there's already a sex museum. Or how 'bout Kabul? There's certainly enough vacant space, and they could use the tourists.

3. **The Identity-design studio:** In these days, where identity groups change names every three weeks, it's easy to run out of appellations. Consider the Negro, er... the black... er... the Afro-American... er... the African American. Or the homosexual...er... the gay... er... the queer. The list goes on. What are these guys gonna do when they run out of names? How 'bout other groups, just discovering their identities?

The Identity Design Studio will solve that problem. Providing jobs for hundreds of linguists and ethnic scholars, we'll be able to come up with new terms faster than you can say Inuit.

Here are some starters: Greeks become *Sphincter Explorers.* Afghans become *Taliban Survivors.* Italians become *Hirsute Endowed.* Mexicans in the US are now *Haircut-Challenged-Americans.* Paraplegics become *bi-abled.* The blind are now *aurally focused.* Lesbians are *People with Labial Preference.*

Got Negro? We'll give you *The Melanin Rich.* Oriental? How about *Science Class Superstars*? We got a million of 'em. A needed service if ever there were one.

There are plenty more projects in the works. We've got to start slow. There's an empire to be built out there. It's up to George and I to build it. I think we're up to the task.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: www.mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

—> *On the German Front dept:* That great German Rock-o-Rama band, KINDER STATT INDER, may make it to the U.S yet. They were scheduled to start their tour last December, but the U.S. State Department denied them visas. "We don't need foreign bands playing in the U.S.," they said. "They take jobs away from Americans." US lawyers are appealing the decision.

—>*For your information dept:* Now you got the perfect bar bet. "I'll bet you a beer you can't name two states with only one syllable." It'll work every time. There AREN'T two states with only one syllable. There's only one, MAINE. And while you're at it, there's only one state that ends in K.

—>*You be on the bottom this time dept:* I got the following email from Liam Dolan in Ohio:

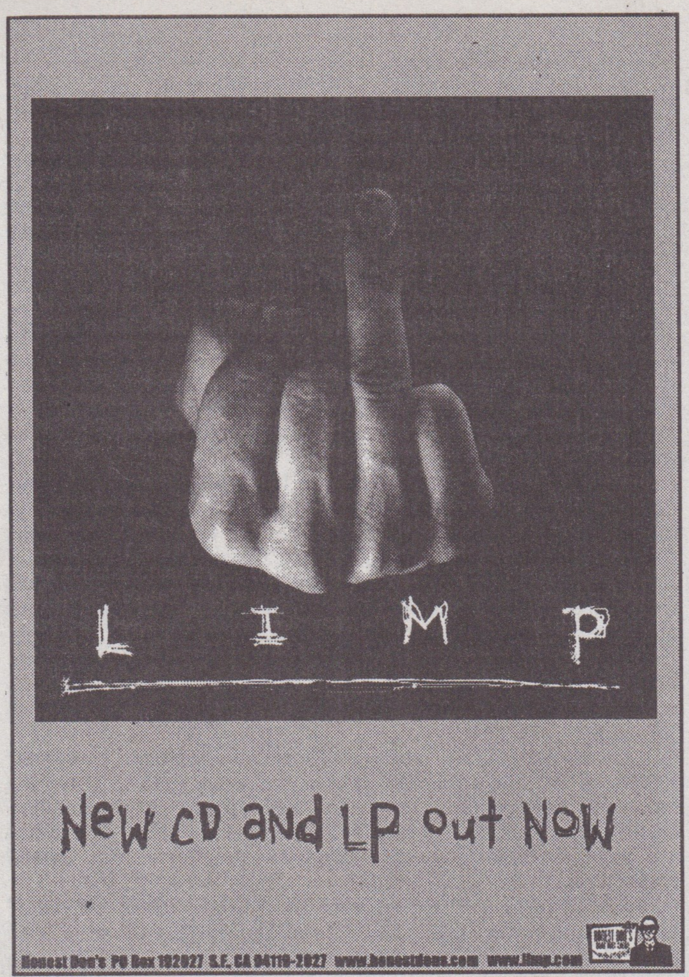
I work in a library here in Cincinnati in the Education and Religion department. One of my jobs is to scan in books from E&R that people request to have sent out to the neighborhood branches. Anyway, I ran across this one yesterday. Nobody else seems to find it funny.

***"The Missionary Position: Mother Teresa in Theory and Practice.** By Christopher Hitchens."*

MISSIONARY POSITION in big letters across the top. Then a nice picture of Ma Teresa. Then the rest in tiny letters.

Thanks for the info, Liam. You want a column?

—> I'll be in Peru from late-March to mid-April. If you're gonna be around, email me so we can set something up. In September, I'll be in Beloit, Wisconsin. My college reunion. Anyone in that area... including the regular crew of Rockford miscreants... get in touch. I'm at the usual modest address: god@mykelboard.com.



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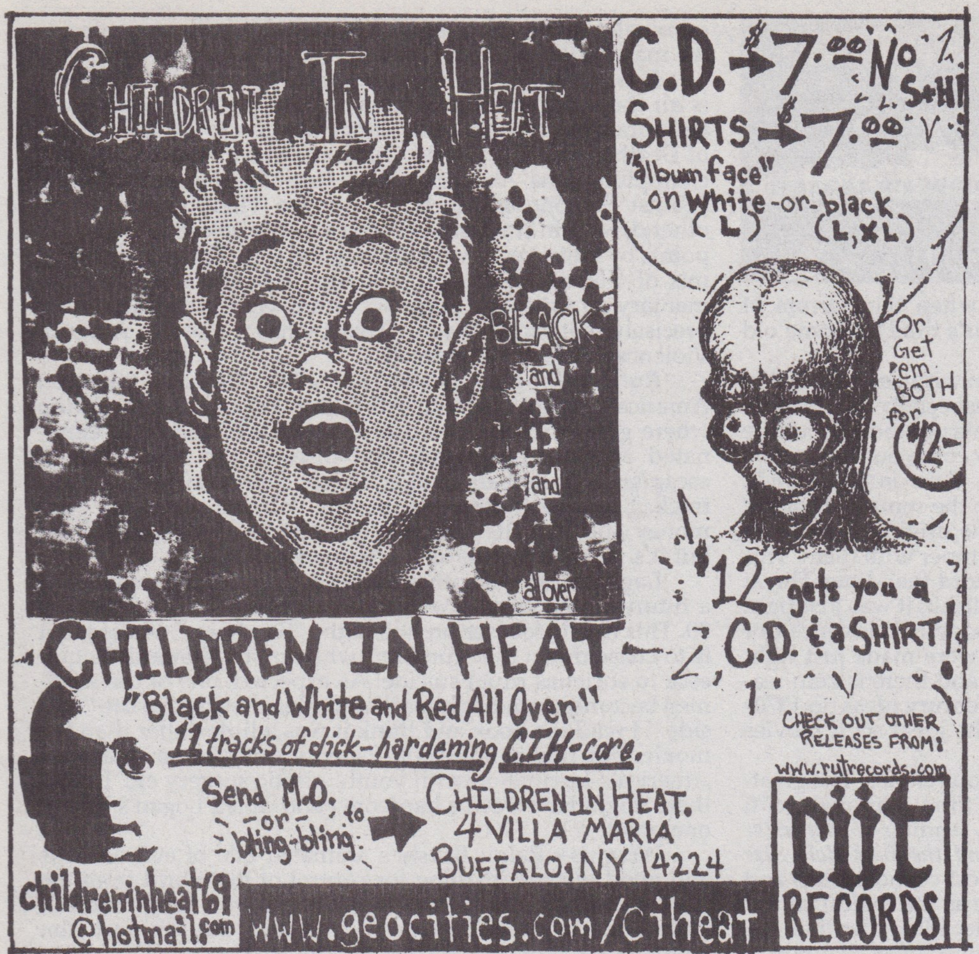

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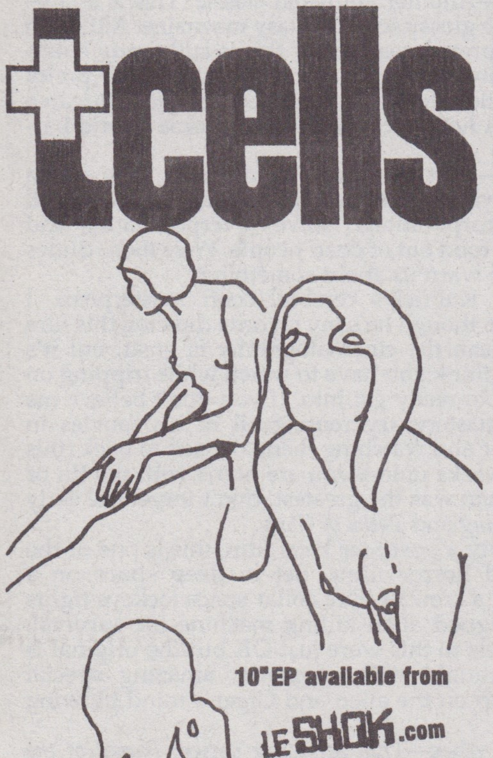

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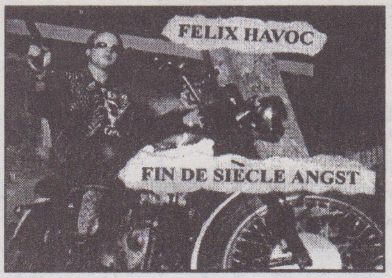

"*Lord of the Rings*, that's totally Juvenile," I said to Michele as I waved the latest issue of the *Punisher* for emphasis leaning against my glass case of Star Wars toys. Here at *Maximum Rock and Roll* we like to mix our punk rock with deep and meaningful social and political commentary. But when the horrors of modern life become too much to bear, it's time for some old fashioned escapism.

Get in your time machine and return with us to the 1970s. This was a great period for cinema, especially the Science Fiction genre. It just shows you how bankrupt today's culture industry is that most of the movies that come out these days are remakes of 70s classics: *Rollerball, Gone in 60 Seconds, Planet of the Apes*, etc. I refuse to go see the remade *Planet of the Apes* or *Rollerball* because I think the originals were just about perfect and there's no reason to tamper with them. This would be like saying "we need to re record the Minor Threat LP to fix all the flaws and update it" Bullshit, it was just right the first time. Maybe the technology today has advanced or whatever, but those films and records were made just right with the materials on hand at the time and there is zero reason to try and superimpose bogus 21st century ideas on 1970s classics. So here then are my picks of the great sci fi movies and comics of the 70s!

Star Wars—OK this is a pretty obvious choice. The greatest science fiction adventure film of all time. Although sci fi became really popular after *Star Wars,* leading to *Battlestar Galactica, Close Encounters of the Third Kind, the Black Hole, Star Trek the Movie, Buck Rogers* etc. I view most of those films and TV shows as bogus and *Star Wars* more as the logical culmination of the filmmaking earlier in the decade rather than the progenitor of a new explosion in the genre. I feel that one of the overriding elements in 70s cinema was the "dark themes" of the *Godfather, Apocalypse Now, Dog Day Afternoon*, etc. These emphasized the disillusionment with American institutions after Vietnam and Watergate. When *Star Wars* with its old fashioned swashbuckling adventure, good versus evil simplicity and uplifting ending brought back those sort of themes to Hollywood. This was a bad move and culminated in crap like *E.T.* And *Alf*. That said, *Star Wars* was a masterpiece, combining elements of Kurosawa's samurai epics with the Western and traditional Bijou Matinee Sci-Fi. Lucas created a most triumphant tale of intergalactic adventure. *Star Wars* came out when I was eight years old so I was in the target demographic dead on. I bought all the toys, saw the movie again and again, read the comics over and over and was there on opening day in 1980 for *Empire Strikes Back,* but that, my friends, is out of our narrative. So, after dispensing with the obvious we retreat into the earlier 70s for the lost classics.

Clockwork Orange—When I was 12 or 13 I used to play Gamma World and D&D over at this kid's house. His older brother had just got out of prison and we thought he was really cool because he taught us how to jimmy locks and break into cars. Anyway, he had a copy of *Clockwork Orange* by Alec Burgess that he'd read in prison that he gave to me to read. I really enjoyed the book and it wasn't until I started hanging out with punk kids that I realized there was a movie. Stanley Kubrick is my all time favorite director and *Clockwork Orange* is a masterpiece. Kubrick's cinematic genius adapts the book with nearly perfect verisimilitude. Some people in the punk scene have criticized the treatment of women in the film and its influence on the skinhead subculture. If you can detach the film and the book from other people's interpretation's of it and view it objectively, it's probably one of the most poignant examinations of juvenile delinquency, crime and punishment in the Anglo-Saxon literary tradition. Kubrick's dystopian (albeit now very 1970s) future of teenage criminality and authoritarian correction is still unequaled in it's masterful cinematography and social relevance.

Death Race 2000—This uncannily prophetic masterpiece is all the more interesting today as it foreshadows the contemporary fascination with things like the WWF and "Faces of Death" and such. David Carradine plays Frankenstein the champion trans American road race champion competing against Stallone as Machine Gun Joe Viterbo and several other drivers in crazy souped up cars. The objective is to score points by killing pedestrians along the way. The out of control mix of violence and sex in this film is such a scathing commentary on American popular culture, yet so entertaining for precisely that same reason. "That's what we love in America Violence! Violence! Violence!!"

Rollerball—Like *Death Race 2000,* this one takes on America's fascination with sports and violence. Set in a future where giant corporations control the world and have eliminated all poverty, hunger and disease, the only form of escapism is Rollerball, a super violent sport played on a circle track. I'm sure the remake of this will suck, so save your money and rent the original. The plot really drags at times but it's worth it for the action sequences.

Logan's Run—Another ironically prophetic movie. Set in a future closed society where no one is allowed to live over 30. This movie focuses on two of the "Sandmen" whose job it is to chase down the "runners" who don't voluntarily acquiesce to societies ritual suicide. As expected, one of the sandmen becomes a runner himself and tries to escape to the "outside." I read the book and think it was a little better than the movie, but this is still cool. Especially it's commentary on America's fascination with youth, plastic surgery etc. I think there might have been a hardcore band called Logan's Run at one point.

Wizards—Ralph Bakshi's animated tale of evil wizards and good wizards battling for control of the world from the land of Scortch. I haven't seen this one in a long time but Bakshi was a great filmmaker who also did the first film adaptation of *Lord of the Rings* and the Spiderman TV show.

Heavy Metal—Another animated classic. This is a cinematic version of the glossy sci-fi/fantasy magazine. Although the soundtrack is pretty weak today this is still pretty entertaining, the plot and dialogue are so weak that it's pretty good to put on while listening to some records and just watch the cool aliens and hot space chicks and muscle bound barbarian dudes.

Soilent Green—Not the metal band, dude. This was a killer movie set in yet another dystopian future where an evil government and corporations "solve" overpopulation and hunger by making food out of dead people. Were those dudes in the 70s trying to warn us about something?

2001—Stanley Kubrick's cerebral sci-fi masterpiece. I have to admit, even though he's my favorite director, this film sort of drags. I mean the cinematography is great, but it's really something I think you have to watch while tripping on acid or something to really get into. If you don't believe me about Kubrick's mastery, try renting all of his movies in chronological order and watching them all back to back (this will take several weeks unless you are home with the flu or something) This man was the greatest, don't forget the early ragers like *The Killing* and *Paths of Glory.*

Alien—Actually a post *Star Wars* film, this is one of the greatest sci-fi and horror films. Set in deep space on a spooky spaceship, a crew of blue collar space jockeys fights an HR Giger designed alien killing machine for survival. Crucial! The sequels to this were just OK but the original is a masterpiece. Fraught with suspense, amazing special effects and makeup on the alien and Giger's mind blowing sets.

Planet of the Apes—This amazing series: *Planet of the Apes, Beneath the Planet of the Apes, Conquest of the Planet of the Apes, Escape From the Planet of the Apes,* and *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* is a total must see for anyone into 70s sci-fi. If you ask me, the first movie and *Conquest* are the best, while *Battle* and *Escape* are pretty weak. Charlton Heston's spaceship somehow crashes on Earth thousands of years in the future where mutant Apes have taken over and humans are reduced to mute victims of vivisection. "The only good human is a dead human!" There is a lot of 70s social commentary about technology, environmentalism, and racial prejudice mixed in here which only adds to the continuing fascination with these films. *Monkeybite* fanzine anyone!

Mad Max—OK I like the *Road Warrior* better, but that didn't come out until the 80s. This 1979 classic features a young Mel Gibson as a renegade cop fighting a desperate gang of bikers in the Australian outback. There are two versions of this film. One Australian original and another dubbed with American accents. Definitely seek out the Aussie version. "I'm laying down a rubber road to freedom!"

Also cool: *Zardoz, Silent Running, Damnation Alley, Firebird 2010, Barbarella Queen of the Galaxy, THX 1138, The Man Who Fell to Earth, Omega Man.* This column is really about the 70s but I can't help but mention some early 80s classics *Blade Runner* and the *Road Warrior,* which no one should be without. And *Tron,* which is my best bet for a remake. I loved that video game.

Now we move on to 70s sci-fi in the comic books. Most of this stuff has no value to collectors and you can probably pick it up for pennies at a comic book shop. The only other person I've met in the punk scene into this stuff is Ken Sanderson of Prank Records.

2001—This comic I think I actually liked better than the movie. Jack Kirby's cosmic style lent itself perfectly to the cosmos spanning and deep world of Kubricks' film. This book continued for a year or so and is notable for spawning Machine Man, a crucial super hero in his own right.

Deathlok the Demolisher—My all time favorite comic book character. Deathlok originally appeared in *Astonishing Tales* in 1974. This character and title have been revived by Marvel several times but none even touches the original mid 70s Deathlok.

Deathlok was a cyborg killing machine. A super soldier experiment who rebelled against his creators and did battle with the CIA and mutants in a dystopian future (New York City 1997). This comic is so cool I wish they would bring it back as close to the original concept as possible. The only time I ever had a letter printed in a comic book was writing in to complain that the last incarnation of Deathlok wasn't as cool as the 70s original.

Kamandi Last Boy on Earth—OK it's really strange for me to be into a DC comic, but Kirby jumped to DC for a while in the 70s and did two awesome sci-fi titles, *Kamandi* and *OMAC.*

Kamandi was basically a knock off of *Planet of the Apes.* Based on the adventures of a "last boy on earth" who is the last survivor of the old order raised in a secret bunker. He emerges into a world run by mutated animals where humans are mute and treated like slaves (sound familiar?) Every issue of this when Kirby was writing is solid gold, totally goofy but still great. It continued for several years after Kirby left but not as good. This title also tied in to *Hercules Unbound,* which wasn't that good.

OMAC—The One Man Army Corps. OMAC was another Kirby triumph. Set in a dystopian future where a super governmental international law enforcement body is set up to police run away corporate greed, OMAC is their top agent. The coolest thing about this guy is he had a big black mohawk in 1974! Kirby used this comic to deal with a lot of issues that are still current today like technology, genetic engineering, cloning and rampant corporate power. This only ran for a few issues and was revived in the 90s for a pretty cool limited series. Rumor has it that OMAC was Kamandi's father.

Heavy Metal, EPIC, Star Reach, 1984/1994—The 70s was the golden age of black and white comic magazines and sci-fi/fantasy comics. Combining elements of sci-fi cinema with super hero comics and underground comix a new generation of artists created some stuff that was too sexual and gory for mainstream comics but still totally juvenile escapism not to be taken very seriously, therefore pretty cool. *Heavy Metal* still exists although it's not as good. These comic magazines from the 70s are all over the map. Every few issues is an absolutely amazing story with mind blowing artwork, interspersed with total schlock. Still stuff like this isn't exactly big ticket items on Ebay, more like stuff you find on a box in the floor of the comic shop for a buck a piece so what the fuck?

Killraven Warrior of the Worlds—This guy was fighting for the survival of the human race against the Martian invaders of HG Wells' *War of the Worlds.* This comic got really trippy sometimes but there was plenty of action Killraven was cool because he fought a lot with ray guns and also swords and throwing stars. I always liked it when people mixed swordplay with ray guns. This is of course why light sabers are so rad. There was a character in this comic called Old Skull!

Warlord—Enter the Lost World of the Warlord! Inspired partly by Arthur Conan Doyle's *Lost World,* this story of adventure swords and sorcery and robot warriors obviously influenced by Marvel's popular Conan titles. I'm sure these go for less than a quarter today, if any comic shops even bother to stock them. But if you are into dudes battling robots while riding flying dinosaurs this is some wicked shit.

The Micronauts—Basically one of the only cool Toy company spin off comics I can remember other than GI Joe. (*Rom the Spaceknight* and *Shogun Warriors* were pretty dismal) I don't know how many people remember the Micronauts toys; they were just as cool, if not cooler than the Star Wars action figures with their interchangeable parts and cool characters like Baron Karza and the Acroyears.

The comic was actually really cool. Basically a group of space adventurers flee the evil Baron Karza through a time warp from inner space to earth where they show up about three inches tall and do battle with the police, lawn mowers etc. This comic ran for several years after the toys faded away but the first twenty or so issues are the best.

Star Wars and *Battlestar Galactica* comics. OK these were cool, but not as cool as the movies. The *Star Wars* comics were pretty good, especially the years in between *Empire* and *Star Wars* for those of us who needed a monthly fix. But the art and writing steadily declined over the years.

The Eternals—Another Cosmic Jack Kirby creation, this time back at Marvel. I guess Kirby read *Chariots of Fire* and got really inspired by the idea that there was a vanished race of space aliens who visited the ancient Incas or something. Either way this was pretty cool but unfortunately degenerated into a standard superhero comic after a while and the Eternals got integrated into the Marvel Universe messing around with Thor and stuff. There was a cool character called "Karkas" who was the prototypical burly grind core dude. One of a race of evil mutants called the "Deviants."

John Carter Warlord of Mars—The 1930s Edgar Rice Burroughs character got treated to a few years of glory in comics form by marvel. I read all books so I thought the comics were pretty cool. Who can resist Tars Tarkas the four armed green Martian warrior dude battling enemies of various hues? Flying cars, radium bullets, and lots of sword fighting on Mars. Nobody does shit like this anymore.

Conan the Barbarian and ***Savage Sword of Conan***—OK this along with *Kull, Red Sonja, Klaw,* etc., is swords and sorcery, not sci-fi and really deserves its own column, but the Conan comics especially the first 20 and really up to issue 100 or so are some of the best ever. The Barry Windsor Smith period was so epic. The *Black and White Savage Swords* were awesome right into the late 80s. It's a shame Marvel killed off Conan and Swords and Sorcery has died out as a genre. I'd take Frank Thorne's *Red Sonja* over *Xena Warrior Princess* or *X Men* any day.

OK, next month I'll talk about punk music I swear, I'm outta here, gotta ride my BMX bike to the arcade to play some Missle Command and Battle Zone.

My Mother Wears Combat Boots
Jessica Mills

I'm proud that this column is actually accomplishing the goal that I hoped it would. Parents are getting in touch—with me and with each other—to share stories, advice and more.

Kids really do need to come with some sort of helpful instruction book—maybe we can write one together that will be a hell of a lot more useful than the sterile, corporate sponsored mainstream parenting magazines. My kid will have her second birthday in a month and a half and there's still times when I have to turn to the nearest adult and literally ask, "What do I do?" I hear that this parental desperation never stops.

So, even though the need for helpful advice or just help in general won't likely stop, it's also affirming to just share stories and thoughts with each other. It's comforting to hear other parents' stories because you learn that you're not alone. Let's face it, for many reasons, having a kid while involved in the punk community can be isolating

With that said, read on. This month's column was written by Lacie. She currently lives in Sacramento, CA, is involved with Food Not Bombs, and would like to find more to be a part of. Anyone and everyone is welcome to get in touch with her—you can find her email address at the end of the column.

As always, punk parents please get in touch (yardwideyarns@hotmail) to be a voice in this column or to just correspond. If you have gotten in touch and haven't heard back from me yet, please be patient—I'm trying really hard to stay on top of working, parenting, playing, getting the diapers washed and life itself. You can send $1 to PO Box 12839 to get a copy of the first year's worth of this column in zine format.

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One minute I'm hopping trains and asking for spare change. Next thing I know the pills from the free clinic didn't work, so life's about to change. I was squatting when I found out I was pregnant. Homeless and carefree. I could pick up and leave in the blink of an eye. No one to answer to but myself. Now here I am facing "responsibility" and "growing up." Ah, those words I would have avoided forever had it not been for motherhood. But they were speeding straight toward me, I was nothing more than an innocent deer frozen in their headlights.

Now I don't normally have, or at least remember dreams. But throughout my pregnancy I'd dream of sneaking through train yards carrying a baby on my stomach. Tossing a baby carrier on a slow moving boxcar. I'd awake and remind myself those days were gone.

Hunter was born in March of '98. I was barely 18. My basic outlook on motherhood consists of two simple principles. First, don't do as your parents did. Some of the best parents I've seen follow that one. Granted, it doesn't apply to everyone. Second, the way I see it is, Hunter didn't ask to be brought into this fucked up world. And he sure in the hell didn't choose to have some teenage squatter chick as his mother. So I do the best I can (as any parent does) to just be a good mom. Provide him with he essentials and let him have fun and be happy and carefree. Innocence never lasts long so I want him to enjoy it while he can. I try not to sweat the small stuff. Who really gives a fuck if he jumps on the bed or picks his nose? He made me proud last week. It was the first time he peed outside. I've tried to get him to do it before but he gets stage fright. Not that time. He went on the other side of the tree, mooning all the passing cars and peed. That's my boy!

Now there's tons of obstacles I deal with on a daily basis. It's not easy making rent with just me and Hunter in a one bedroom apartment. It fucking sux working full time just to keep that, not getting to spend enough time with him. There's been times I don't know how the fuck I managed. Down to three diapers and broke. Still not sure how I pulled that one off. But I get by. And always will.

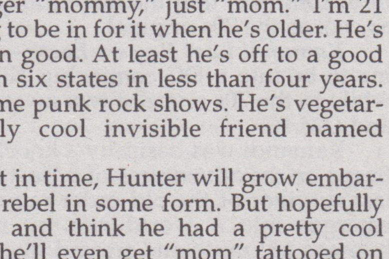
I guess the hardest bump in the road thus far came after me and my ex split up. Hunter had a father figure of sorts who had been there half his life, so as long as he could remember. Then he was gone. Initially it didn't seem to phase him. Then I noticed how strange he'd act with guys he'd meet. He'd cling to complete strangers, but only guys. It really bothered me at first. I never thought we'd run across a problem of that sort. I'm his mother yes, but I throw him around and play rough with him, as my ex did. But apparently that wasn't enough. Normally Hunter shows initial shyness with new people. It doesn't last long, but it's there. Suddenly even someone I'd never seen before he'd wander over to them and want them to hold him. The way he'd look at them and smile was really scary to me. Like he was looking for some new daddy in a crowd. Anyone who'd acknowledge him. I became very frustrated because I didn't really understand why I wasn't enough.

After a while I tried to ignore it and as long as it didn't bother the people Hunter attacked, I'd let it go. Allow him to get that attention he craved when the chance arose. Once I began to socialize a little more (after finding Food Not Bombs here) his attacks on complete strangers subsided because I began to see the same people every week. Therefore Hunter would see the same guys every week that would play with him and give him attention. He still wants a daddy though. His friends at daycare all seem to have them. But I think as long as he's around good friends who happen to be male, he'll be okay because they're going to be around. I've never wanted to expose Hunter to boyfriends of mine. I've only had this one since the time he was born, aside from his biological sperm donor (we won't even go into that). So I guess I'm hesitant to open myself up to anyone. How will it affect Hunter? And when whatever fizzles away, will Hunter feel abandoned? I talk to my son a lot and try to simplify it enough for him to understand. Not everyone has a mommy and daddy. Some people just have a mommy. Or just a grandma. Families are in different forms and sizes. I think eventually he'll understand and as long as he's surrounded by good people who care about him and play with him, he'll grow up happy. That is all I can hope for.

Hunter is growing up fast. It's really scary. Right now he calls me "mom." No longer "mommy," just "mom." I'm 21 and I'm "mom." I'm going to be in for it when he's older. He's too damn cute for his own good. At least he's off to a good start though. He's lived in six states in less than four years. He's been to some awesome punk rock shows. He's vegetarian and he has a really cool invisible friend named "Motchock."

I'm sure at some point in time, Hunter will grow embarrassed of his mother and rebel in some form. But hopefully someday he'll look back and think he had a pretty cool upbringing. Hell, maybe he'll even get "mom" tattooed on his arm on mother's day. After all, he did crash his first car on mother's day at age two!

Lacie - veganpunkmommy@netzero.net



Stories You Hate

We begin this month with a few vinyl stories you hate to read, submitted by a few of our scum brethren…

"Walked into a NYC store that mostly stocks new records looking for a just released NEW BOMB TURKS record, but found something much better in the "N" section: THE NOTHING "Uniformz" 45. For $4. And they had multiple copies since I later found out that someone else had gotten one earlier, also for $4. And none of them are left — I've gone back a few times and asked. And this is a place that specializes in hardcore, and stocks most of the KBD-style comps..."

"There was a Cleveland mail order that I had previously bought a few less exciting things from, off excerpts of their catalog which were posted on their website. One night I discovered that they finally posted their complete catalog of 10,000 or so items on the web as a poorly formatted text list. It was so hard to read and full of crap that I almost gave up a few letters in. The dealer priced a 1980s PAGANS single at $50, but totally missed the only really valuable record on his list, a copy of HAMMER DAMAGE for $10."

"I was on tour with my band in St Louis. Luckily the rest of the band slept in on Saturday morning. I had an hour to kill so I walked over to Vintage Vinyl having known their website (only a block away from the apt I was staying at, I doubt I would've managed to steal the van!). So I walk in and head for the singles. It's pretty meager offerings, with a small display containing mostly new singles, and a row of about 30 used singles. Start digging...jaw drops...MENTALLY ILL "Gacy's Place" 7"... $1 ... and what's this one, I don't recognize the sleeve, but it says MENTALLY ILL "Sex Cells"...$1. You get the idea. Other notables were WEIRDOS "Solitary Confinement" $8, VICTIM "Why are Fire Engines Red" $1, NNB "Slack" $0.50 ... My hands are shaking as I take the stack up to the counter, there must be a mistake. The clerk looks over my stack with a puzzled look. Oh no he's on to me! It turns out, during that entire month, all used product is 50% off...thank you!"

"Again, I'm at a gig with my band, this time in Homewood, IL at a club adjacent to the record store RECORD SWAP which has unfortunately gone under since. They have a huge bin of singles, probably 1,000 or so, and many appearing to have been sitting there for a good 15 years. I search through the recent arrivals and general used areas, but it's obviously well picked over. then i look below the bin into a cabinet and there more stacks of old stock. Keeping in mind that at this point I was still unfamiliar with many bands and what their sleeves looked like, I managed to do pretty well for $2.50-3 a pop. I remember the ICE 9 7", SHOCK 2nd 7", DOGS "Teen Slime" 7", ROSES ARE RED 7", and unknown to me at the time, a sticker announced "Chicago 70's SEX PISTOLS wannabes...does anyone remember?" THE EXIT "Who Asked You" 7". The sleeve was kind of off-putting, but with a SEX PISTOLS reference I had to buy it. A few months later I traded it for THE DICKS "hate the police" 7" + $100 which dwarfs my $3 investment…"

"My best find was several years ago in Zurich. There was a store doing a clearance on a bunch of old vinyl. There were several bins of 7"s which I went though which had some nice things like a SNUKY TATE EP and a some European things priced at a few dollars. I ended up chatting with the guy who was looking after the place and it turned out there were boxes of old 7"s down in the basement that had been there since about the mid 80s. Thousands of 7"s. They hadn't been priced out yet but he let me look through them. A few hours later I had a stack of stuff which included the DOGS "John Rock", multiple copies of just about every old Swiss punk 7", several copies of a bunch of things like FRONT PAGE, FILTH, TITS, etc. There was even some interesting hardcore like the first AGENT ORANGE (Holland) EP, the early TERVEET KADET 7"s, RATTUS, etc. I ended up with a few hundred 7"s and I must have exhausted all of my luck that day."

Tasty Treats

Rob Noxious aka Rob Chambeau aka Roberto aka Guy Archembeault aka Guy aka Tony From Hawaii aka Surf Dude aka Mike and Ray E aka Mike and Ray Ern aka Mike and Ray Ernst aka Mike and Mary Lewdsnot aka Lewdsnot. The very name(s) send shivers down the spines of record collectors. He can smell vinyl from miles away. He will find you. He will hunt you down from his perch in Huntington Beach. He will trade want lists and pester you for every little scrap of vinyl you have.

His pathology runs far deeper than your average scum, however. His preoccupation with identity or escaping it defies logic. When I first met him in 1986, he went by the name Rob Chambeau. He has morphed through the years into numerous personas, which the internet has further enabled him to do. It almost seems farcical. One collector met him at a record show and Rob introduced himself as "Joe" or something, then proceeded to introduce himself to the guy's friend as a different name. He once reasoned that he used a fake name because he's French and no one could pronounce his name.

Another collector sold a few things to Lewdsnot on eBay. Lewdsnot's "real" name was the Ernst brothers from a Huntington Beach P.O. box. Correspondence from the Ernst brothers professed familiarity with Rob, and went so far as to pass on a "hello" from Rob.

The letter went on to talk about this little record trading cartel of a few people in Huntington (all his other alter egos?) who shared info and records, and even had meetings of some kind, even mentioning a girl was involved as one of the traders.

"So I'm packing up the records and thinking how it looks like Rob's writing, so I dig out a couple wants lists, and it's really similar, but what really got me was all the little things he does that no one else does. He puts the return address in a triangle in the left corner and puts the "TO:" with stars and underlines. One of his writing personas tries to be cool, with various trademarks like "dig" (I dig xyz 7"), "tasty treat", etc. "

Rob also has an alter writing ego which is decidedly uncool. One collector characterized it as a Latka-from-Taxi-style English? One email from the Ern brothers went like this: "Yes, we would very much like to buy this wonderful punk/powerpop gem from you indeed. It would be very good and we send you money and thank you very much for any other fantastic vinyls you sell us please." This letter emphatically underlined the "Ray and Mike", like he's really trying to convince somebody.

Even his age is denied. For years after he turned 28, which was 12 years ago, he has told people that he is 28. Current estimate is that he was born in 1962.

Rob's want lists are legendary in both their depth and his ability to get them into anyone's hands. More than one of us have been contacted by him out of the blue. My first contact with him was the night before the Gilman record swap in Berkeley back in 1986. He called me out of the blue and read off his want list over the phone. It was filled with advanced obscurities that I had never heard of such as Tazers, Underwearheads, Braineaters, etc. Apparently he was calling from the Maximum house because the next day he was banned from the swap for stealing records from the Maximum house.

While at least one collector claims to have gotten a handwritten want list from him painstakingly listing every superrare punk record known to man, another claimed to have been Rob's photocopy guy. "He'd send me his shitty, barely readable, dot matrix list and I'd run off hundreds of copies for free at my Kinko's and ship them using their account. I got a few records in exchange but definitely less than what I should have gotten in exchange for thousands of $'s in copies…."

But most of all, it is his relentless pursuit of vinyl and getting the best trade that has been his trademark and a source of grief for many a collector. Rumor has it Rob was once on the "Dating Game" and won an all expense paid trip to New Orleans. His plan of course was to ditch the chick and hit all the record stores.

One of his ploys is to turn up at peoples houses without letting them know he's coming. He did that quite a bit in the UK a few years back. He told me the reason he did this was so people wouldn't have a chance to hide their best records. He has traveled extensively around the world through the years, including Australia, Europe and Japan, plundering and pillaging wherever he goes.

Another collector said this about Rob's relentlessness. "He wants to make deals that satisfy him totally ("you have cool records but mine are better") and he is very pushy about getting a record. I wish I had hidden away the RED SQUARES "Time Change" 45! And you have to insist on getting the records from him first and insisting on registered shipping of records…"

Deep down in the psyche of the record collecting epitome, a sort of nice if not troubled person lurks. Rob, like most of us, had the sort of unhappy childhood that led us to punk in the first place. And thanks to him, I've been the proud owner of the HOLLYWOOD SQUARES 45. Nuff said!

Class of '77

In December 2001, old LA punks got together for the "Class of '77" punk reunion gig, wherein luminaries of yore strutted their sagging asses. This month's correspondent, a distant relative of Thrashhead, gives us the following inarticulate lowdown.

HAL NEGRO AND THE SATIN TONES - featuring Brendan Mullen, ex-Masque honcho on drums, doing lounge versions of classic rock. Shite. Brendan's new book "We Got The Neutron Bomb" is totally amazing tho and well worthy of your attention.

CONTROLLERS – Overweight and sloppy.

GEZA X - Solo acoustic. Histrionic. About as appealing as it sounds.

PHRANC – Cancelled. Thank God.

MIKE WATT AND GEORGE HURLEY - George was behind the drum kit, Mike stood to the far left on bass, pointed to the empty stage and shouted "dave boon". Guitarless versions of MINUTEMEN songs. Edgy and meaningful. Ended with a :15 second cover of the URINALS' "ack ack ack" that was intense. Probably the most "punk rock" moment of the evening. As Watt left the stage, he shouted "Start your own band".

DOGS – Tight blaze of guitar, with Loren pogoing around. Insisted on playing their new 45 "Class of '70" which sucks balls and includes a lot of corny revolutionary lyrics, but they redeemed themselves by ending with a brutal "Slash Yr Face".

CHERI CURRIE AND SANDY WEST OF THE RUNAWAYS. I said, "Are you all right ?" "I wanna hear you sing, 'It's all right'". "C'mon, louder". This is the kinda rock star ramalama bullshit that drove me to punk in the first place. Ended with the stuttering "Cherry Bomb", which is d-u-m-b, but undeniably ridiculously catchy.

SKULLS - Manic and entertaining. Building models, victims, on target, kill kill kill!

THE REST OF THE SCREAMERS – Paul Roessler on keyboards and KK Barrett on drums. Distorted, arty and great.

ADOLESCENTS - A fucking riot. All the original members. Rikk Agnew has ballooned into a mountain of lard with a bushy black beard. Looked like Pig Champion. They looked like shit but sounded hot. "No Way" and the place just erupted.

FEAR – "I Love Living in the City" and "I Don't Care About You" were good, but they played way too fast. And Lee Ving in his jean jacket and long stringy hair is looking too much like Willie Nelson…

SOME OF THE CIRCLE JERKS – Keith Morris and Greg Hetson with a supporting cast. A couple of CJ tunes ("Wild in the Streets", "Century City"), a pretty decent cover of "Nervous Breakdown". Woulda preferred "Wasted" "Fix me" and "I've had it". Then they dragged Cliff Roman up there on guitar for "We Got The Neutron Bomb" and "Solitary Confinement". Again, this veered into gross out rock star spectacle territory a la "rock'n roll hall of fame all star jam" bullshit.

BAD RELIGION, AGENT ORANGE, TSOL – Missed 'em. Fuck'em.

Email to henry@killedbydeath.com. Records and CD's for special attention to Henry 4309 23rd St, San Francisco, Ca, 94114. Or fuck you.

CrimethInc.
Workers' Collective Bullet-in

Against Multi-culturalism "Let a thousand flowers bloom" By Peter Lamborn Wilson & Mao Tse-tung (revised)

The USA was always supposed to be a "melting pot." Canada, by contrast, calls itself a "mosaic," which may explain thy Canadians seem to suffer a kind of long-drawn-out and perpetual identity crisis. What does it mean to be "Canadian," as opposed to (or as well as) Quebecois, Celt, or Native?

In the 1950s, the USA was supposed to be immune to such headaches. All cultures would "melt" and fuse into the American character, the main stream. In truth, however, this "consensus" culture was simply English colonial culture with amnesia, and a faded patina of frontier bluster.

Immigrant cultures which resisted meltdown were considered simply abnormal; the Irish, for example, were viewed as savage recalcitrants until quite recently. Of course it was hard to tell if certain cultures remained "outside" because they wanted to or because they were excluded. In the 1960s, blacks were identified as an unfairly excluded culture, and steps were taken to absorb them into the mainstream (through school integration, for example). Native Americans were still excluded by law, which defines them by blood rather than by culture, and maintains "segregation" by the reservation system. Jews, Hispanics, Asians, each followed their own trajectory toward assimilation or resistance.

By the late 1970s or early 1980s, it became obvious that the Melting Pot had somehow failed. Black culture, the test case, now appeared impossible to absorb. The "consensus" was in danger. The Right, with its schizophrenic attitudes toward race and culture, had faltered. A new "liberal" consensus was proposed. It was called multiculturalism. Let there be no mistake: multiculturalism is a strategy designed to save "America" as an idea, and as a system of social control. Each of the many cultures that make up the nation are now to be allowed a little measure of self-identity and a few simulacra of autonomy. School textbooks now reflect this strategy, with 1950s illustrations of happy historical whites retouched to include a few blacks, Asians and even Natives. A dozen or so departments of multiculturalism spring up at university level. Each minority must now be treated with "dignity" in the curriculum. Conservatives raise a stink: the Canonical Shibboleths of Western Civilization are in danger! Our children will be forced to study ... black history! This babble on the Right lends multiculturalism an aura of "radical" righteousness and political correctitude, and the Left leaps forward to defend the new paradigm. In the middle—according to theory—balance will be restored, and the consensus will function again. The trouble is that the theory itself emanates neither from the Right nor Left nor Center. It emanates from the top. It's a theory of control.

The old textbooks depicted all ethnic/cultural particularity as a taint which could only be overcome in the great pot of conformity to the Norm. Yet the Norm was itself so clearly and simply a form of hegemonic particularism that the textbooks wore thin and eventually grew transparent. They had to go—I agree. Now we have a few texts which admit, for example, that Columbus was a mixed blessing and that Africans were not morally responsible for being slaves. This is a step forward—I agree. However, I remain interested in knowing precisely who has given us permission to hold such opinions—and why?

In the first place, it seems obvious that each of the "many" particular cultures is being measured against or assimilated to a mainstream "universal" culture. The only difference is that the mainstream now, apparently, values a bit of "diversity," and feels a bit of permissible nostalgia for colorful ethnic customs. At the heart of the discourse however, the very discourse which now defines itself as "multicultural," there remains a "solid core curriculum" made up of the same old Euro-rationalist axiomata, scientistic triumphalism, and ruling-class teleology.

This mainstream constitutes Civilization, and only on the periphery of this centrality can the cultures find a place. Whatever the cultures may possess which might be of use to Civilization will of course be accepted with gratitude. Each quaint little local culture has something to offer, something to be "proud" of. A museological passion inspirits the Center; everyone collects little ethnic particularities; everyone's a tourist; everyone appropriates.

The multicultural conversation as totalist monologue might go something like this: Yes, your little handicrafts will look good in my living room, where they'll help disguise the fact that my house was designed by—and perhaps for—a machine. Yes, your sweat-lodge ceremony will provide us with a pleasant weekend "experience." Gosh, aren't we the Masters of the Universe? Why should we put up with this bland old Anglo-American furniture when we can take yours instead? Aren't you grateful? And no more Imperial Colonialism either: we pay for what we take—and even what we break! Pay, pay, pay. After all, it's only money.

Thus multiculturalism is seen in the first place to propose both universalism and particularism at once—in effect, a totality. Every totality implies a totalitarianism, but in this case, the Whole appears in friendly face, a great theme park where every "special case" can be endlessly reproduced. Multiculturalism is the "Spectacle" of communicativeness—conviviality which it renders into commodity form and sells back to those who have dreamed it. In this sense multiculturalism appears as the necessary ideological reflection of the Global Market or "New World Order," the "one" world of too-Late Capitalism and the "end of History."

The "end of History" is of course code for the "end of the Social." Multiculturalism is the decor of the end of the Social, the metaphorical imagery of the complete atomization of the "consumer." And what will the consumer consume? Images of culture.

In the second place, multiculturalism is not just a false totality or unification, but also a false separation. The "minorities" are told in effect that no common goals or values could unite them, except of course the goals and values of the consensus. Blacks have Black Culture, for example, and are no longer required to assimilate. So long as Black Culture tacitly recognizes the centrality of the consensus—and its own peripherality—it will be allowed and even encouraged to thrive. Genuine autonomy, however, is out of the question, and so is any "class consciousness" which might cut across ethnic or "lifestyle" lines to suggest revolutionary coalitions. Each minority contributes to the Center, but nothing is allowed to circulate on the periphery, and certainly not the power of collectivity.

Unlike a flower, which opens its borders to bees and breezes and flows out into life, the "consensus" draws all energy inward and absorbs it into a closed system of rigid control, a death-like process which must eventually end in sterility and hysteresis.

Living as we do in the era of total Global order and the physical and cultural environment it secretes, it should be obvious that particularism can represent a form of resistance. The Totality has therefore undertaken to appropriate the energy of the resistance by offering a false form of particularism, empty of all creative power, as a commodified simulacrum of insurrectionary desire. In this sense multiculturalism is simply the recto of that page whose verso is "ethnic cleansing." Both sides spell disappearance for any authentic particular culture of resistance.

At the same time the Consensus secretly encourages race and even class hatred. In the mysterious absence of that "Evil Empire" which once provided an excuse for every act of violent repression and corruption carried out in "defense of Western Civilization," the Consensus must now seek out or even create its "enemies" within itself. Intelligence orgs fall in love with violent nationalists, separatists, and chauvinists of all kinds. In such circles, multiculturalism means: "let them tear out each others' throats, and save us the trouble." Thus every act of rebellion and violent hatred simply increases the power of the "Security State." Already we see that the Discourse of Power is running out of patience with these "darned minorities and all their PC blather. We offered them multiculturalism and look! Still they rebel. Criminals!"

The Left has believed so long in the "International" that it has—so far—failed to adjust to the post-1989 situation with a clear response to the "New Globalism." When the Berlin Wall fell, in the moment of freedom which opened there, a new form of internationalism rushed to fill the breach. As United States politicians crowed about how "the Cold War is over and we won," international Capital declared the end of all ideology. This means not only that Communism is "dead" but also that "democratic republicanism" has served its purpose and transformed itself into an empty idol. Henceforth only one force will "rule"—the rationality of money. Abstracted from all real valuation, representing nothing but itself, money is etherealized, and finally divinized. Money has "gone to Heaven" and left mere life behind.

In this situation both Right and Left will rebel—and in some cases it will be hard to tell the difference. A myriad forms of particularism will arise, consciously or unconsciously, to oppose the false totality and pitiful booby-prizes of multiculturalism's "New World Order." The Social has not ended, of course, no more than everyday life itself. But the Social will now involve itself with the insurrectionary potential of difference. In its most unconscious and deeply deluded form, this passion for difference will simply repeat the old and empty rhetoric of classical nationalism or racism. Hence "ethnic cleansing" from Bosnia to California.

Against this hegemonic particularism, we might propose a more conscious and socially just form of anti-hegemonic particularism. It's difficult to envision the precise shape such a force might assume, but it grows easier to identify as it actually emerges. A miraculous revival of Native-American culture steals the fire of the Columbus celebrations in 1992, and sharpens the debate over cultural appropriation. In Mexico the Zapatista uprising, according to the *New York Times*, the first "post-modern rebellion," constitutes the first armed action against the New Globalism—in the particularist but antihegemonic cause of the Mayans and peasants of Chiapas. I regard this as a struggle for "empirical freedoms" rather than "ideology." In a positive sense one might say that all cultural and/or social forms of particularism deserve support as long as they remain anti-hegemonic, and precisely to the extent that they remain so.

In this context we might even discover uses for "multiculturalism," since it may serve as a medium for the propagation of subversive memes, and the insurrectionary desire for radical difference. Such a subversive "entry into the media," however, can serve only one ultimate purpose: the utter destruction of multiculturalist neo-imperialism and its transformation into something else. If the secret agenda of multiculturalism demands universal separation under the aegis of a false totality, then the radical response to multiculturalism must attack not only its ersatz universality but also its invidious alienation, its false separatism. If we support true anti-hegemonic particularism, we must also support the other half of the dialectic by developing a force to penetrate all false boundaries, to restore communicativeness and conviviality across a horizontal and random web of connectivities and solidarities. This would constitute the true force of which multiculturalism is merely the empty simulacrum. It would complement anti-hegemonic particularism with a genuine reciprocity among peoples and cultures. The "economy of the Gift" would replace the economy of exchange and commodification. The Social would resume circulation on the level of experienced life through the exercise of imagination and generosity.

In this sense the answer to the problem of "appropriation" would arise from the concept of a "universal potlach" of giving and sharing. As a test case, examine the issue of cultural appropriation of Native-American values. The original identity of tribal peoples in the "New" World was tribal, not racial. Anyone could be adopted into a tribe, as were many drop-out whites and run-away blacks. The twentieth-century renaissance of Native Culture has discovered certain spiritual universals which it wants to give and share with everyone, and it has discovered an anti-hegemonic particularism which it desires for itself. The Elders charge that too many Americans want to appropriate or commodify the latter (sweat-lodges, sun-dances, etc.) but ignore or despise the former (reverence for Nature, love of place as topocosm, etc.) . The Native tradition is not closed, despite the just anger and bitterness of the tribes, but demands reciprocity rather than appropriation. Let us Euros first evolve a serious revolutionary attitude toward the restoration of wild(er)ness; then it will be appropriate for us to make the fine Alexandrian gesture of "worshipping local spirits." The Situationists already envisioned this strategy when they coined that much-abused slogan: "think globally, act locally." Our true interests include global realities, such as "environment," but effective power can never be global without being oppressive. Top-down solutions reproduce hierarchy and alienation. Only local action for "empirical freedoms" can effect change on the level of "experienced life" without imposing categories of control. A New-age Nietzsche might have called it "the will to self-empowerment."

The poet Nathaniel Mackay calls it cross-culturalism. The image expresses a non-hierarchic, de-centered web of cultures, each one singular, but not alienated from other cultures. Exchange takes place as reciprocity across the permeable boundaries of this complex of autonomous, but loosely defined, differences. I would add a further refinement. This reciprocity will produce more than the mere sum of exchanges within the system, and this more will constitute a universal value in circulation among free collectivities and individuals. Hence the term "cross-cultural synergetics" might describe the precise term (or slogan) proposed as a replacement for "multiculturalism."

Conclusion

The multicultural paradigm presupposes a false totality within which are subsumed a set of false particularities. These differences are represented and packaged as "lifestyle choices" and "ethnicities," commodities to appease the genuine passion for genuine difference with mere "traces" and images of "dignity" and even of "rebellion." Against this, cross-cultural synergism proposes actual autonomy, whether for individuals or cohesions of individuals, based on radical consciousness and organic identity. In this sense, cross-culturalism can only oppose itself to "multiculturalism," either through a strategy of subversion, or through open assault. Either way, "multiculturalism" must be destroyed.

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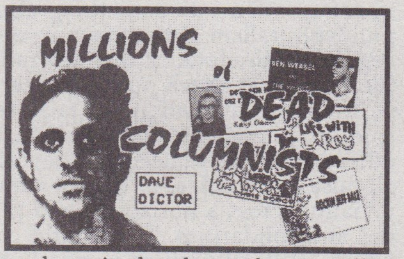

Does Everything Really Always Happen for A Reason?

Well this is your Creep Show kind of column. Your Ides of March type of column. If you don't know what the Ides of March is, it is the 15th of March. This, according to Shakespearean lore, is the day a fortuneteller had forewarned Julius Caesar to be careful of...because bad stuff would befall him. Julius was on a roll from having conquered the world in five years. and with Cleopatra at his side, he had no fear. But he should have, because the Roman Senators were jealous of Julius Caesar and indeed knifed him in the back. And supposedly Julius turned to see his old friend Brutus too, with a hand holding a knife in his back and said "Et tu Brutus?" before dropping dead to the ground.

Creepy, right? Well, back to the title. The title is an expression we have all probably heard before that I put into rhetorical question form. The real line is "everything happens for a reason." I first heard it from my grandmother and it was said in the spirit of looking back into her life and sharing how Grandpa lost his job back in the Depression and how the family had to eat plain spaghetti for two years, but how eventually he landed a job working for the railroad that ended up being a better job and providing for a better life than the one he had lost a couple years before. I heard this as a kid and quickly my cynical mind thought, so is that why they wiped out so many Indians? In my present life it gets used on and by my addict brethren and myself when we are lamenting stuff that happens to one, like getting busted and getting jail time, but someone telling you that at least there in jail you're able to assess your life and make a clearer decision about whether to get back into the drug lifestyle or not, which in my case so far has lead me to stay clean and sober.

Now for the creepy story I am here to share. I was told this story by a friend of a friend who lived in Heidelberg, Germany. In Germany, at least back in the 1980s, they had a compulsory service for all young people. You didn't have to take it with the military; you could serve in a hospital or even choose to take it in a psychiatric facility. The story I heard was a story from the psychiatric facility, of a man that had fallen head over heels in love. For whatever reason, the woman in question's love for him did not last. He decided, after trying to win back her love, to kill himself by putting a rope around his neck, tying the rope to a tree, and hanging himself to death. But his plan went awry, and instead of hanging himself to death, he broke his neck and woke up in the hospital paralyzed from the neck down. This young man was a wreck. Laying in bed, month in and month out. Alone, without even his speech. Eventually, with therapy, he learned to move part of his right foot and a few of his right toes. After a while he learned to hold a paint brush with his toes and became, over time, quite a good artist. He became a sort of cause celebre. Magazines started featuring his art, told his story, and he learned to smile again. It was a miracle of sorts for the people who worked at the hospital and saw all this happen before their eyes. But then one night he became sick with a particular type of flu and the doctor on hand was not familiar with the patient and his allergies and limitations and gave the young man medicine that caused an allergic reaction, which caused him to fall into a coma-like state in which he became completely paralyzed again. Everybody's miracle was erased and needless to say, the quality of life of this young man was substantially decreased—no more painting, no more smiling.

This sad man's story, like that of all the Indians who died through the centuries, like Julius Caesar turning around to see that it is also his friend stabbing him in the back, can leave you to feel that everything does not always happen for a reason. But for myself, hitting bottom in a jail cell probably was what it took for me to wake up, wise up, and clean up. I am celebrating my fourth birthday clean and sober. And that's all for now, except let me ask you to make good choices, to good care of yourself. Try to treat people fairly in as many situations as you possibly can. Enjoy yourself and take good care,

Dave Dictor, mdcops@hotmail.com

The Rogues March

Whoa! You skins and punks better hold on to your fucking jockstraps because the SONS OF LIBERTY are coming to kick your ass! The SONS OF LIBERTY are comprised of two members of the mighty LIMECELL along with three friends from Philadelphia. This is some brutal fucking Oi! for you knuckleheads! The SONS OF LIBERTY sing four songs about the civil war when brother fought brother and men died from a simple flesh wound. The pride, the fear, and the resignation are expressed in great songs like "Duty's Call," read these lyrics: "I will follow though I may die / I swore to answer duty's call / So that my sons can live as free men / Though I may never see them again / At dawn I bid a fond farewell / To go where bugles call / To loud cries of triumph and dismay/ Life and death is like night and day / Soldiers bathe in a river of blood/ Crimson tides on pebbled shores / Amongst the deceased I recognize / Dozens that I had known before / I fear that I will be the next to go / But if it happens will I ever know / I will follow though I may die / I swore to answer duty's call / Go where the bugles call / I swore to answer duty's call." This song will be one of the hardest hitting songs to cross your turntable this year or next year!!! Fuck Yes!!!!

Bob, who plays guitar in LIMECELL, and Steve, who plays bass in LIMECELL, switch duties in SONS OF LIBERTY. Lon is on vocals, Mike plays drums, and Jef is the second guitar player. These bad men start off with "We Shall Meet Again" and then drop a fucking bomb on your house with "December." The guitar playing on this number is scorching! The first song on side two is "The Rogues March" and then the SONS OF LIBERTY fucking slam into the aforementioned "Duty's Call." Great!! You must get this! Write to the SONS OF LIBERTY at PO Box 63565, Philadelphia, PA 19147 USA. Email: SonsOfLibertyHQ@aol.com or contact Dim Records / Ullrich Grossmann, Postfach 11 D-96232, Ebersdorf, Germany; www.dimrecords.de.

The great German skinhead band LOIKAEMIE and England's MENACE have a good split EP out on Knockout Records! LOIKAEMIE start the mayhem with "C And A," a MENACE cover that rocks like a motherfucker! This is one Oi! band that knows how to deliver the fucking goods! LOIKAEMIE then perform a new original tune, "A Good Old Rich Kid Bashing Day." You must listen to LOIKAMIE's LPs *Ihr Fur Uns Wir Fur Euch* and *Wir Sind Die Skins*. Great stuff!

On the flip side of this fine release MENACE initiate the proceedings with a LOIKAEMIE cover "Oi! That's Your Lot" and do a fine job of it too! Next, you get a new MENACE song "Bad Cards" which is mid-paced melodic punk which might appeal to you old punkers.

OXYMORON have a new LP out for you to sink your teeth into! The new *Feed the Breed* LP features fourteen new songs by Erlangen, Germany's favorite punk representatives. Starting with the *Beware-Poisonous* seven inch and the *Fuck the Nineties...Here's Our Noize* LP from 1995, OXYMORON have been one of the most popular punk bands in Europe. This new LP is chock full of 1982 UK style punk anthems. OXYMORON hit you upside the head with "Here We Go," "Hit the Road," "Wild and Dangerous," "R.I.P.," "21st Century," "Bullet-Proof," "Psychopath," "Alive or Dead," "Under Pressure," and more. These punks have been touring incessantly, and as anyone who has seen them can tell you, they put on a hell of a live show! Go see OXYMORON when they come to your town! Go buy the new OXYMORON record! You may order it from Knockout Records, Postfach 10 07 16, 46527 Dinslaken, Germany; www.knock-out.de.

Alex Bagatti and Pure Punk Records from Italy have two exciting new CDs for the skins and punks! First up, we have a split CD with the Italian Veteran streetpunk unit the ROTTEN BOi!S and a new Italian Street n' Oi! outfit THE DISGORGE, making their debut.

ROTTEN BOi!S kick off the two-way split with four hard n' heavy punk/Oi! tunes. "Ragazzi Di Perferia" starts off strong and slams into "Parma Citta Di Merda" which has the trademark ROTTEN BOi!S gruff singing and good metal-flavored guitar. Next up is the theme song, "Rotten BOi!s" and the band sings "Don't give a fuck/ Don't give a shit"—excellent! Next: "Sick World" with monster guitar slashing and bomb attacks with the bass and drums! This is furious, fast, and vehement punk!

Now we embark on a punk adventure with THE DISGORGE playing four fast and thrashy early 80s UK-influenced punk tunes. First you get, "Let's Start a Riot," then smash right into "Fight the Real Enemy." The third barrage of punk ammo comes in "Poseur," where THE DISGORGE start out slow and menacing and then crank up both the speed and volume to attack you from all sides! Very good! Song four by THE DISGORGE is "Punx Never Die," which completes what is an extremely action-packed CD. Be sure to get a copy of this split with the seasoned punkers ROTTEN BOi!S and the exciting new upstart, THE DISGORGE thrashing the shit out of your world! Great!

CD number two from Pure Punk is the six-song CD debut by BIER KAMPF called *Cuore Duro*.. BIER KAMPF start off running hard with their anthem "Bier Kampf" - this song is an Oi! jewel! Screeching guitars get the fucker moving and then the rhythm settles in with churning guitars, shouted Oi!s and superior streetpunk rocking! The men of BIER KAMPF go on to knock you out with "Viv Un Giorno da Ribelle," the title cut "Cuore Duro," "Non ti Fermeranno Mai," "Fino Alla Morta" and "Sporche Schiere". Great! Write to Alex Bagatti, CP 214, 43100 Parma (PR), Italy; email: abgatti@tin.it.

Bronco Bullfrog Records has some top quality CDs available for you skinheads and punks!

The first CD is MALAS CARTAS with their *Suicias Guerras* CD from 1999. This is talented streetpunk/Oi! with some metal guitar playing and shouted vocals. The songs are in Spanish with themes about politics and war. There are good choruses supplied by the band members. Some of the songs are slower and more melodic, with an ANGELIC UPSTARTS feel to them. MALAS CARTAS rips through twelve originals and then gives you two bonus tracks, one of which is "Nation of Fire" by BLITZ. This is a good release!!

The second CD to review on Bronce Bullfrog is SUBURBAN REBELS and their *Nacidos Para Vocar* CD from the year 2000. The fucker starts out with a Clockwork Orange "Singin' in the Rain" introduction and then crashes into "Soldados del Asfalto" which has snarling punk guitars and fine gruff singing with shouted harmonies. This music is fast, high-spirited streetpunk sung in Spanish with some of the popular Oi! music themes represented. There's one song called "Streetpunk," and a frisky number called "Futbol and Alcohol." A song well worth listening to is "Clase Obrera." The song "Skinhead" follows with it's delicate beginning and a powerful segue into a first rate streetpunk/Oi! anthem. The tough-guy singing and loud guitar parts compliment each other well. The final track is "Gotic Bootboys" and this tune is well-crafted and loaded with Oi! hooks. This is a very good CD!

CD number three from the Bronco Bullfrog vaults features FRONT KICK and their fine mini-CD *Los Rechazados de Berlin*. This four song streetpunk bomb-burst has first-rate singing and ringing guitars. The bass player, "Rassel," and the drummer, "Veit," combine to create a full fledged battering ram of rhythm. This short CD packs a lot of wallop! The extremely deep and gravely singing of Bisonte push each song to its full potential. The music has some of the underpinnings of an OXYMORON or DROPKICK MURPHYS influence. FRONT KICK starts their cavalry charge with "Totally Rejected" and swing right into "Riot Kids." Song number three is the rocking "Danger." The grand finale is the band's theme song, called, appropriately, "Front Kick." This is very strong stuff!!

The fourth in our Oi! series from Spain is a really forceful cup of Oi! called LAST WARNING. These skinheads produce a rough and ready brand of fast Oi!/streetpunk that will send you down to the bar immediately. The lead off song, "Sintiendo el Odio," is a rousing number. Next up is "Lobo" and then LAST WARNING tear into the BLITZ classic "Someone's Gonna Die"—great! Next up is an original, "Viejos Recuerdos," followed by "Mars Attacks," and "El Clon de la Sociedad." "El Clon" is a fucking really good tune! The guitar is great! "Kike" plays a good MISFITS riff! "Generation X" is up next and this fucker keeps the streetpunk venom flowing! Next up we get a cover of "Flares and Slippers," written by none other than the COCKNEY REJECTS—probably one of the most popular Oi! street bands of all time! We finish off this high volume Oi! release with two more originals from LAST WARNING: "Warning Crew" about unity among the skins, punks and hardcore kids, and "Masete," a suitable closing sing-along pub song for the boot boys. This is a very good CD from LAST WARNING!

Item five on today's list is Bronco Bullfrog Release Fifteen, a CD from last year by PERKELE who come from Sweden. The Oi! music on "Voice of Anger" was recorded in 2000, and you will find that this CD is populated by fast guitars and deep vocals. PERKELE sing in English with the gruff tones that work so well in street n' Oi! music. The band steams through "Hang 'Em High," "Trendy Wankers" and "Psychopath," and arrive at the excellent tune "Politicians." On this top notch Oi! song, PERKELE have the ringing guitars and intimidating vocals that we associate with the TEMPLARS. Great!!! On "My Own Way," another fine song, PERKELE sing: "You keep telling me that I'm wrong / But you can't stop me from fighting for my future/ You keep telling me that I'm wrong / Because I deal with the problems my own way." In "Raise Your Voice," PERKELE admonishes the skins and punks to voice their opinions, stand strong, and stand proud. "Smash the Scum" deals with oppression of the workers who built Sweden by the wealthy upper-class scum. "The Disease" is a really tough nuts-and-bolts Oi! song about getting the drug dealers and pedophiles off the street. This is a really poignant and timely song! In "Don't Escape," PERKELE advise people from the neighborhoods to take control of the backstreets. "Now it's time to clean up the mess/ Don't escape—fight for our future." The next number is "Working Class" and this one employs the great guitar sound made popular on "All Screwed Up." The first rate lyrics deal with unity and pride amongst the workers. The last song on the excellent CD is "My Home," about the love of everything that you grew up with—football, the changing seasons, magnificent views of islands, forests, and fields, and the overall feeling of pride in your hometown. The *Voice of Anger* CD is one of Bronco Bullfrog's strongest releases to date. Be sure to get this music from PERKELE.

CD number six is *First Strike* by SOCIAL COMBAT. This heavy duty music is streetpunk with hardcore foundations derived from the New York hardcore sound that originated with AGNOSTIC FRONT and the CRO-MAGS back almost twenty years ago. The guitars have the crushing metal-tinged hardcore power and the vocals are shouted with feeling! These brutal hardcore punks use gruff English lyrics to sing about "Dirty Politicians" and the "Kids of Today" with their fight "Against the Social Standards." SOCIAL COMBAT cover "Remedy" by ROSE TATTOO and pump new life into this classic 1981 Australian rock song. Very good! SOCIAL COMBAT slug their way through "Revenge," "Scum," and "Slaves," and then perform their theme song "Social Combat": "Our music is a battle hymn / Our lyrics are our weapons / Believe in yourself—in your way of life / Raise your spirit—never change." "Together" is the next tune about undying support for the football team. The last song is "Working Class Warriors"—a strong Oi!/streetpunk song about the worker who survives the fight in spite of the beatings, exploitation and injustices.

Evil Records, distributed by Bronco Bullfrog Records, present Evil CD# 001 by ULTIMO ASALTO entitled *Nuestro Orgullo Pasado*. This skinhead music is sung in deep deep Spanish vocals with the Oi! Oi! Oi! choruses coming in like thundering bombers! The loud guitar rhythms carry a lot of weight here. The drummer pounds on your cerebellum. The bloody terror and violence comes through loud and clear on this release by ULTIMO ASALTO. The attack is relentless with over-the-top guttural vocals and ham-fisted guitars chomping on your face. The band manages to assault you with ruthless Oi! music and still carry a melody that remains catchy. This is a very good CD! Write to Evil Records, PO Box 804, 07800-El Vissa, (Baleares) Spain; www.evil-records.com; email: info@evil-records.com.

Contact Bronco Bullfrog Records at: Apartado de Correos 1474, 07800 Ibiza (Baleares), Spain; www.broncobullfrogrecords.com; email: bullfrog@arrakis.es.

Another fine band available through Bronco Bullfrog distribution is DESKONTENTO JUVENIL and their *Siempre Que Nos Busquen* CD on Joker Records. This is mid-tempo Oi!/streetpunk with deep singing and good choruses. DESKONTENTO JUVENIL starts the festivities with "Victimas de la Desinformacion" and segues right into "Es Mi Barrio." The boys really apply the heat on "The Last Night of 69," which has a stout Oi! bloodline. "Hay Un Chico En La Calle" is melodic punk rock and then DESKONTENTO JUVENIL plows right into "Digan lo que Digan"—which rocks hard! The vocals are extra rough on this song! Very good! On song number six, "Pase lo que Pase," the guitars settle in for your rhythmic punk pleasure and the tune just percolates right along with catchy hooks. The final song on this CD is the song written by SHAM 69, "Hurry Up Harry." This is really good! Get in touch with DESKONTENTO JUVENIL through Joker Records, Apdo. 367-08080, Barcelona, Spain, www.joker-records.com or through Mark Brown at Bronco Bullfrog.

Knockout Records from Germany has re-released the 1998 BONECRUSHER LP *Working for Nothing* that came out on Hostage Records. Mosh and company have added two unreleased songs to amend what is already considered one of the best punk records of the decade. Way back in 1992 after Ocean County punk band WOLFPACK broke up, BONECRUSHER started playing together. in 1995 BONECRUSHER released their debut CD *A World of Pain* on Lethal Records. This CD got considerable critical acclaim from *Flipside* magazine who promoted it as the second best release of the year (in between THE STITCHES and the US BOMBS). In 1996, BONECRUSHER opened up shows all over Orange County and with each appearance proceeded to kick the headliner's ass! Their sets were so fierce and their fans so rowdy many promoters would not book BONECRUSHER. In 1997 with the help of Dave James and Outsider Records BONECRUSHER became THE band to see at the Clipper Club in Long Beach. The shows they played there are legendary! The rest, as they say, is history. The myth of BONECRUSHER is now even larger than life. No one plays as hard as BONECRUSHER!

Johnny BODIES and his great label Radio Records has a new EP ready for you. This new seven inch is a posthumous release by the SHRINKS called "My Mind's Gone." The names on the record sleeve have been changed to protect the guilty but we know who the culprits are!! This record rocks your world! It is so refreshing to hear men of color playing R.A.C. and Viking Rock with such enthusiasm!!! Write to Radio Records, PO Box 1452, Sonoma, California 95476 USA. for your copy of this soon-to-be-banned politically incorrect EP. This will be an instant record collector geek treasure!!

Mike Josephson and Longshot Records from Vancouver, British Colombia present THE CLEATS full length CD entitled *Lost Voices, Broken Strings*. The Longshot punk rock release starts off with "Something to Lose." A nice little ditty that has a SWINGIN' UTTERS/RANCID feel to it. Next up is "Who Are the Heros Now," which keeps up the high-spirited enthusiasm that song one initiated. Song three is "Sixteen Years," which has more crunch, i.e. snotty vocals—punctuated by strong guitar parts. We move through "Sick and Tired" with its ONE MAN ARMY punk rhythms and end up with "Don't Judge Me," which is crappy melodic pop (ska?) drivel. "Iron on Fire" comes on with guitar hooks and lilting vocals—very sugar sweet pop punk spoken here. The title cut, "Lost Vocals, Broken Strings" has some of the harder vocals and guitar riffs. THE CLEATS employ these successfully. "Just Wanna Be" is a ballad—a love song which is kind of a Mike Ness "Lite" country-flavored song. "My City" starts off plodding slow and then comes out of the chute with a full head of steam. Now here's a good song! "Too Many Funerals" is an apropo treatise on the fragile human condition and the fleeting time here on earth. Pretty damn good! "Never Look for Tomorrow" is a chugging punk number that has decent sing-along parts for you melodic punkers. Then you get a cover of STIFF LITTLE FINGERS "Alternative Ulster" from 1978 and the lads do a respectful job of paying tribute to the Burns/Ogilvie songwriting team. THE CLEATS full length has some memorable tracks but overall might not appeal to case-hardened Oi!/streetpunk cretins who inhabit parts of North America. Write to Longshot Music, c/o 726 Richards St., Vancouver, BC, V6B3A4; www.longshotmusic.com.

The fine French fanzine *Beer Bellies* has an excellent issue number seven available for you skins and punks. This special issue is called: *Cocksparrer—an Unofficial Sparrer Story: Still Runnin' Riot*. This is forty-four photocopied pages written in English, presenting historical background, plus interviews from *NME, Sounds,* and more. Included are pictures of rare record sleeves from Spain, Italy and France, and a complete discography. Very well done! Order from: Medjedovic Sacha, 22 Rue Notre Dame, 59190 Hazebrouck, France, 3.5 Euros or 4$; email: medjhome@waika9.com.

Mark M. Brown and his Streetmusic Publishing have a great 94-page book out called *Red Alert—The Story So Far*, by Kid Stoker. You get tour diaries, lots of pictures, a complete biography, and an extensive discography. Look for a complete review of this great book next month.

Until next month—
See you around...
I'll be seeing you...
See you 'round.
See you at the bar.

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I'm taking this column in a new direction. I might even use a new header, if I can come up with an idea I like. Lately I've been thinking about positions that I find completely untenable. I'm pretty open-minded. I can see the appeal and reasoning behind fascism, communism, anarchism, capitalism, gun control, gun nuts, veganism, meat-eating… pretty much anything. But there is a hand full of views—some popular, some unpopular—that seem utterly bankrupt to me. I want to find the best representative of each of these views and see if they can make a case by way of an e-mail dialog. How do they deal with a long list of objections that clearly look to be fatal? I'll pass the results on here every other month. There are three views that interest me particularly.

1. The first is pro-life. There is one way I can see pro-life being a sound view—if God communicates to the pro-life that abortion must be stopped and if the pro-lifer thinks government should be based on a single set of religious views. But few pro-lifers hold this view. They think fetuses are or should be treated as persons. I've read a fair amount of philosophical literature on the subject and attempts to argue for this view always fail miserably. In fact, I think the only reason they are even paid attention to is because the issue is live politically. The initial problem is that fetuses have none of the attributes that make the lives of most humans valuable (or whatever term you like to use), for example, self-consciousness and desire. One way of arguing is to say that fetuses are human, and therefore deserve to be treated as persons. Problem: your fingernail is human too. So is each human sperm and egg. So are the brain dead. So are the completely dead. You get the picture. The more popular route is to say that fetuses are future persons or potential persons. Problem: the person you might have conceived but didn't because you used a condom last night, or because you decided not to have sex at all, was a future or potential person in the same sense an aborted fetus was. The response is to assert strong potentiality, meaning that there is a real object that is on it's way to becoming a person. Problem one: so what? An acorn isn't an Oak Tree. Problem two: imagine a cell that has begun a Rube Goldberg process that will eventually deposit in a machine that will make it into a clone. That cell has strong potentiality. It seems silly to say it's murder to unplug the machine. That's it, or part of it anyway. You can pile dirt on top of the grave if you want to by talking about miscarriages and whatnot, but this is enough. Pro-life is wrong. So why do a lot of intelligent people hold the view? I'd like to find out.

2. A while ago I went on a Nazi hunt. I scoured the net looking for a proponent of racist policies who could express himself without betraying his idiocy. Surprisingly, I couldn't find one at the time. Most people are totally uncritical on racial issues. For example, they think, or at least say that they think that intelligence can't vary according to race. Why? Because they really, really don't want it to. (To save trouble, I am not saying that intelligence varies according to race). So it seems to me that more people, especially those who are attracted to shocking or outrageous views, would react to that by embracing some sort of racism. Maybe people are smart enough to realize that, regardless of whatever differences between people correlate with race, there is no basis for hostility, and it doesn't make pragmatic sense either. Plus, since we generally deal with people as individuals, group characteristics aren't terribly important Well, I have found a couple of hi IQ bigots, and I'll try to get them to talk to me.

3. The dumbest thing going in our society may be the war on drugs. I won't even bother going through the reasons because I'm sure you know them. It is in the interest of government goons. I know that, but how do they get anyone else to play along? And a lot of government hacks seem to believe in what they're doing. I haven't decided who to talk to yet here: the Gov or some interest groupie.

Any thing you want me to ask? Any ideas on who to interview later? e-mail me at skipyskip@aol.com for these or other reasons.

GUEST
COLUMN
by Cey Mooney

Running around Iraq

So I'm at this telecommunications "business man's" center a good walking distance from the al-Fanar hotel in Baghdad. I have a stack of letters to congresspeople and Senators to fax from "ground zero" and this telephone appointment with Mike Fleming, Memphis' leading conservative talk-show host, at 2:30PM Memphis time, 11:30PM Baghdad time. As soon as we get there we learn that the center, which is usually open 24 hrs, is shutting down at 11:20PM, so I go run to the other business center down Seduun St. I'm a bit nervous and a bit frustrated already, thinking about our last conversation, where Mike said he's sure we'll go "get Saddam, though maybe not immediately." "Get Saddam"—what a joke—might as well say "kill a whole load of people we've never met and get away with it because we can." It makes less and less sense every day when an educated person, especially one who has an enormous amount of media info at his fingertips, doesn't bother to factor in the other 22 or so million people who really "get" it from this stupid war.

At the next place, the phones won't work; something as simple as using a telephone in the capital city of a nation sitting on the second richest oil reserves in the world, and the telephones at the main communications center don't work. I'm dying to spill the beans about this cruel war to the audience who needs to hear it the most—"candid conversation" is the motto of the Mike Fleming program on 600AM, and I've seen enough make my head spin and keep me talking candidly for years, and now it's 11:45—wait! I can go to my friend's hotel and make international calls from there. Lloyd just had his appendix removed only a week after arriving in Baghdad, and he's probably in his room sitting by the phone and watching "The Matrix" on his laptop. I catch a cab ride from an out-of-work engineer and get to the Petra hotel to call Lloyd's room—no answer. Now it's 11:50, so I ask the hotel receptionist if I can make an international call from the front desk. Apparently this is a really confusing request, and I don't speak much Arabic, and these few hotel employees start debating the use of the telephone, which doesn't sit too well with them.

"Are you staying at the Petra here?"

"No, but my friend Lloyd is˜the American journalist who just came back from the hospital. Please charge me whatever you have to, but I would really appreciate using your phone."

So they call another employee over, and the debate ends with,

"I am sorry, but we can not let you use the phone because you are not staying here. I am sorry."

Dammit! I could be calling MY PEOPLE, whose government is waging this silent war I came to see again—it's 11:55PM, and I'm already late for this telephone appointment, so I catch ANOTHER cab ride across town just to make a phone call, getting to the Sheraton just before Mike Fleming goes on the air at 3:00PM Memphis time. It's just a call, right? By now I'm frustrated with the whole thing, running around Baghdad and getting two cabs for something so simple, but the Sheraton—there's NO WAY their phones will be inoperable, and so—they are! What is this? How does the Sheraton have phones that don't work? Every by-the-hour motel on Summer Avenue has a working phone—so now I run across the street to the Palestine Hotel. I get there and practically beg the receptionist to let me make an international phone call, which it looks like they're going to let me do. Security walks me to the hotel operator, who wants U.S. dollars, which I don't have. So we start haggling for the price˜British pounds, Iraqi Dinar, Jordanian Dinar˜in every conceivable combination, but this guy keeps pushing for U.S. dollars, and then we settle on a price with a time minimum, and now it's well after midnight here˜3:00PM in Memphis. I make the call to the call screener. Because Mike's already on the air, and the 3 minutes totally cleaned me out, I just leave my hotel phone number with the staff.

Two cab rides, 5 telephones, one long walk and a lot of running later˜all of this for one call. I haven't slept enough or eaten enough lately, so you can imagine how frustrating this near-impossible pain-in-the-neck errand was. It should come as no surprise, though˜this is Iraq, and Iraq is under the most comprehensive embargo in modern history. As of July 2000, 100% of all contracts for telecommunications were on hold. 100%. All of them—so something so everyday typical as phone don't work well or don't work, even though the Iraqis live over the second richest oil reserves in the world.

Now imagine if you need antibiotics for your child's chest infection. Right now is Iraq's rainy season, especially in the south, and the sicknesses that typically come with the cold, wet seasons come here, too. Imagine that, instead of wanting to make a phone call, I need simple antibiotics for my child's infections. Maybe this course of antibiotics could not be finished because the supply ran out, and contracts for simple medicines are on hold, so the alternative treatments are sought—you know what happens to a healthy, well-fed person who doesn't finish a course of antibiotics? How about a malnourished 4-year-old? The infection comes back stronger, sometimes immune to the previous drug. Just the other day, Carel DeRooy at UNICEF told me that they have finally arrested chronic malnutrition for Iraqi children under the age of five. The rate isn't declining, it isn't increasing; it has stabilized at about 20%. If you are a small child in an Iraqi hospital, chances are you're malnourished.

More likely than not you can't afford the black market drugs because you sold so many of your family's possessions last time one of your children˜maybe the same one˜couldn't get proper medicines at the hospital, which now costs money because no cash is allowed into Iraq under the "oil for food" program. How does the government pay for doctors? Repairs and maintenance for hospital equipment? Al Monsour pediatrics now has ONE working elevator, and it's not because of the UN's humanitarian program; it's because the hospital now costs money.

Maybe you can't afford the drugs on what you earn hustling for rides as an amateur cab driver; you had to quit your professional job because it's impossible to meet your family's needs on $10 per month, and your car just might last longer than your job.

So, I'm walking home, cursing this pain-in-the-neck evening, wishing I were somewhere where modern civilization isn't falling apart and going insane; while I wait for a phone to work, the Iraqis wait for their children to live or die. Ceylon Mooney. PO BOX 42185 Memphis, TN 38104 ceymooney@hotmail.com

GUEST COLUMN

by Carolyn Brouillard

Punk is a ghetto we have all constructed. When I look within the punk scene, I find an alarming concentration of uneducated beings shackled with addiction, poverty, and abuse. It seems punk has became a metaphor for alcoholism and despondency, where those individuals who actually do work hard and prosper are disrespected and their "punkness" questioned. It is a sad fact that many punks believe those who go to college or get so-called real jobs are sellouts and less punk than those who squat, travel, work minimum wage jobs, etc. It is a sad fact, but it is also based on a misconception. Certainly there are people who enter college and abandon punk rock, but there are some of us, myself included, who believe education and skill should be the quintessence of punk culture and intend to stay involved.

For so many of us, it is our dream to be a little more free. I think this desire is a common thread that weaves punks together. And it is this hope of autonomy that prompts the DIY ethic, which should be inseparable from punk. To me, punk is about DIY and DIY is about independence and strength. There are many ways to approach self-sufficiency, but it all comes down to possessing a broad range of skills. I don't mean that every individual should be able to fix everything, build everything, or teach everything. DIY is collective and inclusive; everyone's role is important.

After four years of drinking, traveling, and working at shitty jobs, I decided to go to college. Some people have told me that my reason for going to school must be to become a yuppie and a snob. While it is true that I am in school to have more choices about my future and gain a greater understanding of the world around me, in a sense I'm in school for all of us. It angers me that at my school of 25,000 students there is a mere handful of punks. So many of the students are misogynistic jocks, greedy spoiled kids, and narrow-minded clones who have no respect for individuality, creativity, let alone the environment and social issues. And those are the people who will inherit the positions of influence and power. These are the people who will be making the decisions that can impact all of our lives. It is to their benefit for punks to be uneducated and dependent, so they can maintain the status quo and accumulate wealth at our expense. Just imagine if we all got trained, educated, started our own businesses and schools. Imagine if we gained the control to be able to protect people who truly want to be left alone by society. Imagine if we had some influence over the media, the school boards, the energy industry, the way each of us lives our lives. We'd be a little bit closer to realizing our dream of freedom.

There is strength in knowledge, skill, and creativity. At the core, punk is a creative culture, with music being the predominant (and most wonderful) expression. There is great potential in a culture so infused with creativity. But we have to use our minds, our hands, and our hearts. Things like alcohol addiction and utter poverty kill the alacrity and vivaciousness of our scene. They make us dependent on things found outside ourselves and often induce apathy, violence, and indolence. I know college is not right for everyone and certainly the universities make it challenging for poor people to attend Just another way to concentrate power in the hands of the rich), but there are lots of things that can be done. Skill sharing should be a larger focus in the punk scene. Greater value should be placed on education. People who steal from other punks, ruin gig spaces, rape women, and engage in senseless violence should be reprimanded for their actions. We should build a stronger community based on ingenuity, trust, and action. Do it yourself, for ourselves, for the flourishing of punk culture, and for a freer existence.

GUEST COLUMN
by Crispin

Truth Hurts

Many readers ask me: Skinhead Crispy, what are you listening to these days? Tell you soon. Meanwhile here's a complete political philosophy to tide you over.

If I had to stick a word on what ails us I'd call it "gigantism." The character of an institution is less important in practical effect than its size.

The Soviet government, it turns out, is the same kind of organization as Exxon/Mobil and the Catholic Church, but also the family, the band, the start-up firm, and the terrorist cell turn out to have the most important things in common.

The term "progress" turns out to refer almost exclusively to gigantism, so that first the nation-state, then the mega-state a la the US, then perhaps the "global economy" are held to be the bearers or agents of progress. To say that this is an error and a horror is putting it lightly.

Much of the discourse about Afghanistan has been about the fact that the country is "pre-modern." The supposedly self-evident conclusion is that they've got to get up to speed. Now there are certain ways that this makes sense: it's be good to have better healthcare there, for example. But part of it really indicates that we think there are too few franchise opportunities, too little control by insanely gargantuan world bodies such as, say, the UN. Well that's all over now. Maybe a lot of the violence in Afghanistan and emerging from Afghanistan is over. But so is one of the few remaining zones of strangeness, chaos, and independence.

The European Union, as of 1.1, is using the Euro. They're merging into one mega-economy. Is that obviously good? Well, only if you despise cultures, musics, languages, loves, truths. Only if you think there are things more precious in this world than huge gleaming boxes made of glass and steel. Only if you place some value in persons or relationships.

Everyone is going to be all happy I guess when there's no such thing as black culture, black music, black christianity, when there's no such thing as southern pride, home cooking, or home truths. When there's no chauvinism because there's exactly one kind of person. Oddly that kind of person will be us: Tony Blair, Jacques Chirac, George Bush, Donald Trump: white dudes.

Actually, I'm sure everyone respects black culture or whatever. You couldn't have passed through all those institutions, all those schools and shit, and come out saying something that jagged. Right. Well, if you do than you had better think about exactly those schools and so forth. Cause even while they celebrate black history month or some lockstep shit, they're giving us all a little catechism for cultural annihilation. In fifty years, it'll be too late to realize what we lost. But I guess we won't have lost it after all, cause black culture will be a new series of postage stamps, a new series of PSAs, a new series of action figures. Your respect is killing things.

But I'll make you a little prediction: you can't kill the local without killing the people. You can't get rid of the cultures and leave the institutions intact. You fucking little bureaucrats, you can't fucking make us all the same. People will be dressing in burqas, playing hardcore punk, withdrawing, subverting, destroying themselves if they have to just to destroy you. Your progress, your enlightenment, your "freedom," your uniformity: you'll die of it before we will.

Once you've got institutions of a certain size, they reduce or pretend to reduce actual human beings to sheer placeholders. They "float free" or purport to float free from their sources and effect in human experience.

And if I had to stick one word on the solution, I'd say I was an advocate of "balkanization": the disintegration of huge systems into tiny ones; devolution; retrogress.

First of all, everyone should have their own state: the Kurds, the Basques, the Pashtuns, the Tibetans, the Texans, the Manhattanites, the Druzes, the skinheads, the Pentacostals, the Inuits, the lesbians, the kindergartners, etc.

When I was fourteen, I seceded from the union and declared my body to be an independent nation. I printed my own currency, and issued a passport to my girlfriend so she could, um, enter. Eventually each body should govern itself. But meanwhile you could just come to the basic realization that your body is yours and not the FBIs. Just act independent and see if anything happens. TAZ. Eventually I plan to issue a declaration of independence for www.crispinsartwell.com: a zone not subject to any laws but those undertaken voluntarily.

People talk and write as though it were self-evident that you don't want these huge systems to disintegrate. Well, that's anything but self-evident, isn't it? Ultimately, human liberation is achieved one fucking person at a time. Get that on board. After that, we can talk.

Now if you started to get this crap on board, you'd have to stop thinking about what we're going to do about the problems that beset us. How are we going to get control of the drug problem, the poverty problem, the education problem, the race problem, the obesity problem. The only problem is the problem problem. You see: your solution for these problems is going to be institutional, isn't it? (Oh yes it is.) Then that *is* the problem. You should not should. You can't get anything done except lies, because the institution is a lie. So let the fuck go and see what happens, right? *See what the fuck happens.* People will improvise solutions to the actual problems that they actually face. Or the problems will kill us one by one. The institution, though, will suck the life out of us all at once, and of course as it grows larger, it always harbors within it the possibility of that final solution in which it simply starts erasing people, because it can. Lapse. Stop. Relax. Surrender. Solve your own fucking problems.

The mega-system derives from two related impulses: the impulse to seize power over people and the impulse to solve problems. The idea is: we're going to get control of the world and fix it. The question: what can we do about education? is question-begging; it assumes that we're in control or that we should seize control. The fact is: you can't do a damn thing about education. Or, if you can, it's by controlling people: making teachers do some mechanical bullshit, having students recite little catechisms etc. You want control of the students down to the level of the gesture, in which communicating with other students is against the rules. Schools have become bureaucratic institutions in every possible way, and this is supposed to be self-evidently a good thing. The prison, the mental institution, the army: these are the models of the modern school. My honest opinion is that you can't tech anyone shit. People teach themselves. But either way, you don't want this kind of dehumanization.

Fortunately, the institution always harbors networks. You got your little smartass vandals. You got your skaters. Your druggies. And it turns out to be their school too and their seeing what they can get away with. The only way to get any real control would be to assign a bureaucrat to each student, and then probably some of them would be plotting with their little charges to undermine the bullshit.

Perhaps the invention of monotheism, commonly attributed to Abraham, is the springhead of the movement of history toward consolidation, its "progress." The pagans could add gods to their pantheons willy-nilly and by that method absorb other cultures without the necessity of expunging them. But monotheism creates the reflection of itself at every moment; it hierarchizes everything in imagination. And so it tends to create institutions to consolidate its power; a canon to consolidate the belief structures of its adherents; sigularity of purpose within the believer himself: fanaticism. It is pretty hard to imagine a real Zeus fanatic, though of course such things are possible. But god certainly calls out at this moment for balkanization: that sucker needs smashing.

"Terrorism" as we us the term at the moment, refers to the introduction of chaos into ordered systems, with loss of life. The fanatic's god should be balkanized, but his people are somehow outside the structure that has already been consolidated. Thus we might conceive the terrorist, depending on circumstances, as embodying a clash of gigantisms, or, more commonly, the clash of balkanization with gigantism. There could be no more potent symbol of the consolidation of forms of power that the World Trade Center, a kind of grid into which we can fit all the world's money. That conflagration yinned our yang. (Please do not understand this as saying that I endorse murder. I do not. Nor do I think the WTC deal was an act of war or something. But it is the sort of destruction that the consolidation of power makes inevitable.)

So Crispy, what you listening to? First off, the relatively new: THE PEAWEES, the Italian roots Ramones. Really they've got the whole history of good rock on board: they sound like the Crickets backing Bo Diddley, who's singing with an Italian accent and slamming. "Dead End City" was my #1 disc for last year, the best of a very mixed bag of Europopunk from Stardumb. Meanwhile the Stardumb comp THE EUROPEAN POP-PUNK VIRUS gives you sad young punks trying to pronounce English lyrics, but also astoundingly good shit like THE TRAVOLTAS and THE BATTLEDYKES. Then the relatively old: RITES OF SPRING's classic eponymous harDCore on (natch) Dischord. This thing has been hanging about in various forms since 1985, when Guy Picciotto left for Fugazi. It's just been remastered, but every year it reveals another layer of excellence. Mayve after MINOR THREAT's "complete" Discography, the best thing ever to come out of the town where I and the United States government originate.

BE PREPARED FOR ACCIDENTS

with arwen curry

Attention: what follows is not April Fool's! I repeat, not April Fool's!

As of this issue, MRR is no longer distributed by Mordam Records. The main reason for this is their recent change of policy to allow for the inclusion of major label-licensed records in their catalogue. This, among other things, indicates that they are heading in a different ideological direction, away from the independent network of labels and zines they have supported over the years. For many years, Mordam was our exclusive distributor, which means that they handled all of our sales outside of mailorder. This exclusive, "family" relationship has tied us in very closely with their ethical decisions. The distributor was founded, with assistance from Tim Yo and MRR, as a network of protection for independent labels from grasping, omnipresent majors. Therefore, one essential tenet of this network was its complete independence from majors: no major label licensing, no major label ads in the magazines. This changed several months back, when the new contract was issued. The change is antithetical to independent distribution in general and Mordam's historical independence in particular. It looks suspiciously like classic "slippery slope" symdrome. We gave it serious thought here at MRR, and our conclusion was that there are certain things which cannot be compromised, and this is one of them.

What does this mean for MRR? We've taken a good, hard look at the independent distribution network recently. For a zine of our size, there is no independent full-service equivalent to Mordam, which means that we will now sell through more than one distributor.

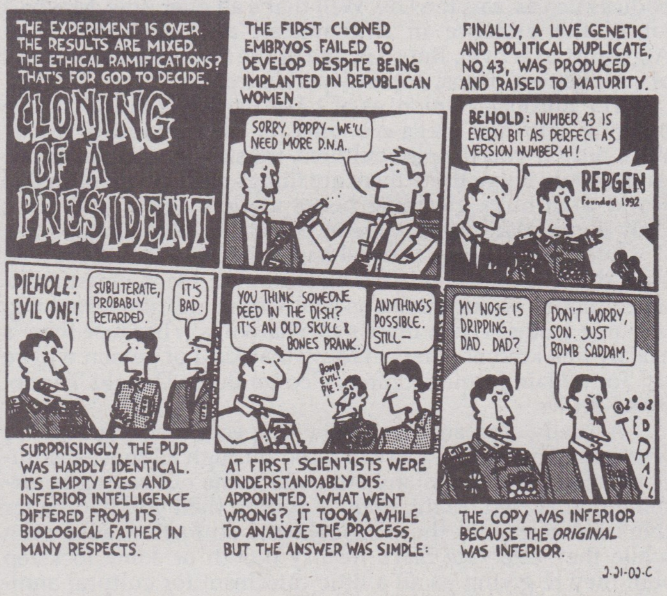
A percentage of our copies are currently distributed by Big Top Newsstand Services. They are a non-profit magazine distributor; a division the IPA (Independent Press Association), an organization promoting and supporting the free, independent press. A current example: they are organizing for (sorely needed) special postal rates for independent publications. Big Top carries about 70 magazines, from *Clamor* and *Thrasher* to *Z Magazine* and *Urban Ecology.* They will handle all of our sales to newsstands through a handful of distributors—like Last Gasp, Desert Moon, Ubiquity, Marginal, Armadillo, Kent News Services, and Media Solutions, who should get us into all the same bookstores and newsstands where you're used to seeing us. This is essentially the same group of book distros we have used through Mordam.

If all goes as planned, MRR will continue to be available in all the same record stores, as well. Currently, record stores should contact Revolver and/or No Idea for copies. Your standing orders can probably be transferred.

It's an interesting time for us, that's for sure, and to tell the truth, we're pretty excited about it. One goal of ours is to get affordable copies to foreign distributors. Postal rates and distribution hassles have made MRR and other zines hard to get and way too expensive: we will attempt to ship in enough bulk to foreign distros and mailorders to bring the prices back down and make sure they're available at a table at a hardcore fest near you. Ideas? Want to distro MRR abroad? Let us know.

Mike and I will continue to keep you updated about changes in our distribution.
arwenc@mindspring.com

PS. Self-promo: Send two stamps for my new one-page zine, *Ration*, to MRR's PO Box. I'll have my own PO Box next month!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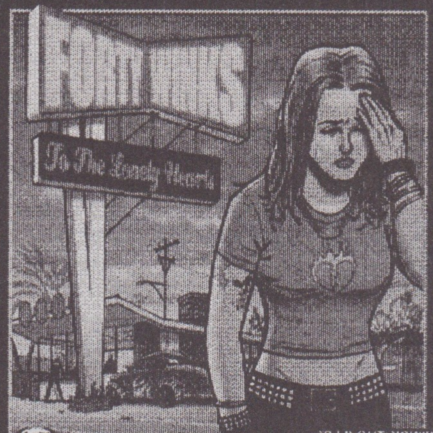

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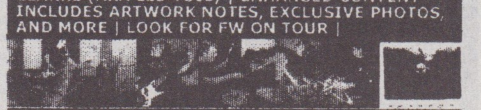

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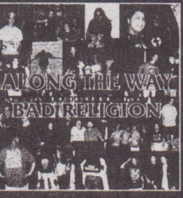
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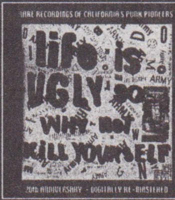
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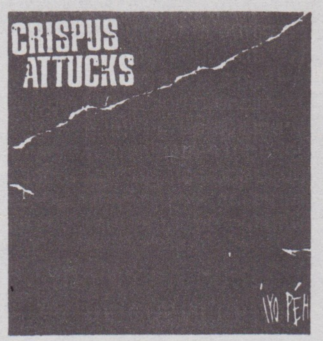

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27th	We	Rochester	@	Brighton Town Park
28th	Thu	Pittsburg	@	Chatham Rea Coffeehouse
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1st	Mon	Long Island	@	Backstreet Blues*
2nd	Tue	NJ		*
3rd	Wed	Philly	@	Cavelry Church*
4th	Thu	Maryland	@	MESH
5th	Fri	Richmond, VA	@	the Warehouse
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14th	Sun	Dallas	@	Corinthians House
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17th	Wed	Tiajuana, Mexico		
18th	Thu	LA	@	the Smell
19th	Fri	Ojai		
20th	Sat	Berkly	@	924 Gilman
21th	Sun	San Francisco	@	Mission Records
22nd	Mon	Chico	@	Senator Theatre
23rd	Tue	Redding, CA	@	Milleville Grange
24th	Wed	Portland	@	The Ranch
25th	Thu	Olympia	@	Pheonix House
26th	Fri	Seattle		
27th	Sat	Spokane, WA	@	Cafe Sole
28th	Sun	Boise	@	Alano Club?
29th	Mon	Salt Lake City	@	Machu Pinch
30th	Tue	Denver	@	the Junkyard

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2nd	Thu	St. Louis	@	Czech Center*
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11th	Sat	NYC	@	ABC no Rio
12th	Sun	Philly		
13th	Mon	western,mass		
14th	Tue	Boston, Mass		
15th	Wed	New Jersey	@	Joyce Kilmer
16th	Thu	Baltimore	@	MESH
17th	Fri	Woodbridge,VA	@	Hi Fidelity records
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19th	Sun	north carolina		
20th	Mon	Savanah,GA		
21st	Tue	Daytona Beach,FL		
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23rd	Thu	Athens,GA		
24th	Fri	Nashville,TN		
25th	Sat	Ft.Smith,Arkansas		
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27th	Mon	Austin,TX	@	the Black Cat
28th	Tue	New Mexico		
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June

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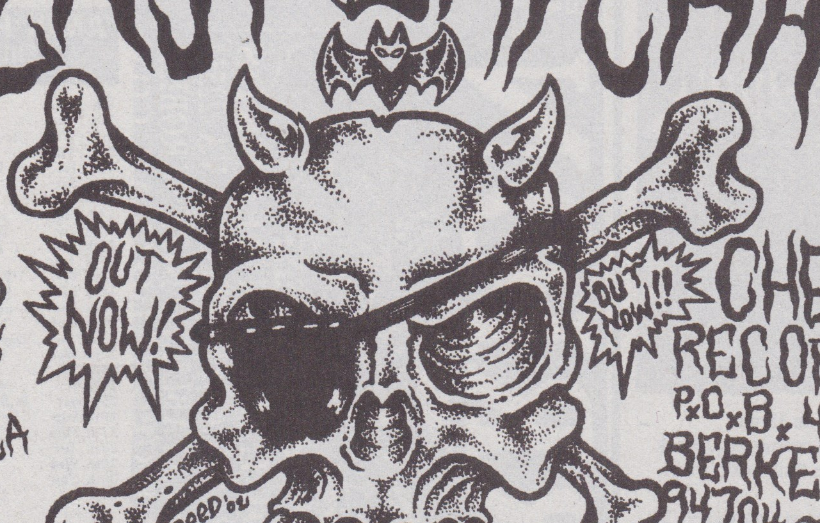
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MRR NEWS

No. 228
May 2002
compiled by:
Mimi Nguyen

Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting (FAIR) MEDIA ADVISORY:

Pentagon Propaganda Plan Is Undemocratic, Possibly Illegal

February 19, 2002

The New York Times reported today that the Pentagon's Office of Strategic Influence is "developing plans to provide news items, possibly even false ones, to foreign media organizations" in an effort "to influence public sentiment and policy makers in both friendly and unfriendly countries."

The OSI was created shortly after September 11 to publicize the U.S. government's perspective in Islamic countries and to generate support for the U.S.'s "war on terror." This latest announcement raises grave concerns that far from being an honest effort to explain U.S. policy, the OSI may be a profoundly undemocratic program devoted to spreading disinformation and misleading the public, both at home and abroad. At the same time, involving reporters in Pentagon disinformation puts the lives of working journalists at risk.

Despite the OSI's multi-million-dollar budget and its mandate to propagandize throughout the Middle East, Asia and Western Europe, "even many senior Pentagon officials and Congressional military aides say they know almost nothing about its purpose and plans," according to the Times. The Times reported that the OSI's latest announcement has generated opposition within the Pentagon among those who fear that it will undermine the Defense Department's credibility.

Tarnished credibility may be the least of the problems created by the OSI's new plan to manipulate media-the plan may compromise the free flow of information that democracy relies on. The government is barred by law from propagandizing within the U.S., but the OSI's new plan will likely lead to disinformation planted in a foreign news report being picked up by U.S. news outlets. The war in Afghanistan has shown that the 24-hour news cycle, combined with cuts in the foreign news budgets across the U.S., make overseas outlets like Al-Jazeera and Reuters key resources for U.S. reporters.

Any "accidental" propaganda fallout from the OSI's efforts is troubling enough, but given the U.S. government's track record on domestic propaganda, U.S. media should be pushing especially hard for more information about the operation's other, intentional policies.

According to the New York Times, "one of the military units assigned to carry out the policies of the Office of Strategic Influence" is the U.S. Army's Psychological Operations Command (PSYOPS). The Times doesn't mention, however, that PSYOPS has been accused of operating domestically as recently as the Kosovo war.

In February 2000, reports in Dutch and French newspapers revealed that several officers from the 4th PSYOPS Group had worked in the news division at CNN's Atlanta headquarters as part of an "internship" program starting in the final days of the Kosovo War. Coverage of this disturbing story was scarce (see FAIR's "Why Were Government Propaganda Experts Working on News at CNN?" 3/27/00), but after FAIR issued an Action Alert on the story, CNN stated that it had already terminated the program and acknowledged that it was "inappropriate."

Even if the PSYOPS officers working in the newsroom did not directly influence news reporting, the question remains of whether CNN may have allowed the military to conduct an intelligence-gathering mission against the network itself. The idea isn't far-fetched-- according to Intelligence Newsletter (2/17/00), a rear admiral from the Special Operations Command told a PSYOPS conference that the military needed to find ways to "gain control" over commercial news satellites to help bring down an "informational cone of silence" over regions where special operations were taking place. One of CNN's PSYOPS "interns" worked in the network's satellite division. (During the Afghanistan war the Pentagon found a very direct way to "gain control"-- it simply bought up all commercial satellite images of Afghanistan, in order to prevent media from accessing them.)

It's worth noting that the 4th PSYOPS group is the same group that staffed the National Security Council's now notorious Office of Public Diplomacy (OPD), which planted stories in the U.S. media supporting the Reagan Administration's Central America policies during the 1980s. Described by a senior U.S. official as a "vast psychological warfare operation of the kind the military conducts to influence a population in enemy territory" (Miami Herald, 7/19/87), the OPD was shut down after the Iran-Contra investigations, but not before influencing coverage in major outlets including the Wall Street Journal, New York Times and Washington Post (Extra!, 9-10/01).

The OPD may be gone, but the Bush administration's recent recess appointment of former OPD head Otto Reich as assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs is not reassuring. It suggests, at best, a troubling indifference to Reich's role in orchestrating the OPD's deception of the American people.

Indeed, as the Federation of American Scientists points out, "the Bush Administration's insistent efforts to expand the scope of official secrecy have now been widely noted as a defining characteristic of the Bush presidency" (Secrecy News, 2/18/02). The administration's refusal to disclose Enron-related information to the General Accounting Office is perhaps the most publicized of these efforts; another is Attorney General John Ashcroft's October 12 memo urging federal agencies to resist Freedom Of Information Act requests.

In addition, the Pentagon's restrictive press policies throughout the war in Afghanistan have been an ongoing problem. Most recently, Washington Post reporter Doug Struck claims that U.S. soldiers threatened to shoot him if he proceeded with an attempt to investigate a site where civilians had been killed; Struck has stated that for him, the central question raised by the incident is whether the Pentagon is trying to "cover up" its actions and why it won't "allow access by reporters to determine what they're doing here in Afghanistan" (CBS, "The Early Show," 2/13/02).

Taken together, these incidents and policies should raise alarm bells for media throughout the country. Democracy doesn't work if the public does not have access to full and accurate information about its government.

Protection for Oil Pipeline Raises US Profile in Colombia

New Policy Stirs Fears Bush Seeks to Widen War

by Karl Penhaul

February 16, 2002 San Francisco Chronicle

(excerpt)

BOGOTA, Colombia -- The Cano Limon oil pipeline, which snakes almost 500 miles across northern Colombia, was once the focus of dreams for national prosperity.

But after years of sabotage bombings by leftist guerrillas, the pipeline may serve instead as the trigger for wider U.S. involvement in Colombia's 36- year civil war, some critics warn.

Earlier this month, the Bush administration announced it will ask Congress for $98 million in the 2003 budget to train, arm and provide air support for Colombian troops to defend the pipeline, which is jointly owned by the Occidental Petroleum Corp., with headquarters in Los Angeles, and the Colombian state oil company Ecopetrol.

The move marks a shift from previous U.S. policy of providing only military aid, which was reserved almost exclusively for anti-narcotics operations.

U.S. officials say training a battalion of 1,000 men to guard a petroleum pipeline is not part of the war on terrorism but rather an effort to preserve Colombia's economy, which derives about one-third of its export earnings from oil.

The pipeline is "important for the future of . . . our (U.S.) petroleum supplies and the confidence of our investors," said U.S. Ambassador Anne Patterson in a recent interview with the leading Bogota daily El Tiempo.

Critics, including community leaders in towns alongside the pipeline andthe guerrillas, say the shift will intensify the conflict in Colombia's oil-rich northeast.

U.S. Anti-Abortion Extremists Bring Violent Tactics to Britain

Feminist Daily News Wire

February 13, 2002

The Army of God, a clandestine network of anti-abortion extremists based in the U.S., sent a threatening letter to a British law firm, George Green & Co., whose clients include a women's reproductive healthcare clinic that provides abortion services in England. The letter read, "George Green Solicitors…are acting for baby killers. George Green staff are now legitimate targets. Army of God." Included with the letter was an Army of God newsletter detailing a bombing of a Birmingham, Alabama clinic. The newsletter also contained many references to the "war" being waged in the U.S.

George Green & Co. had represented a clinic manager who demanded that personal information about her be removed from an anti-abortion website run by UK Life League. Last year, UK Life League posted another clinic director's personal information on its website. Within one week, this information was also posted to the Nuremberg Files website, a virtual "hit list" of targeted abortion providers, clinic staff, and others, run by U.S. anti-abortion extremist and Army of God member Neal Horsley.

The Army of God has been tied to the two rounds of over 500 anthrax threats letters directed at health clinics and reproductive rights advocacy organizations throughout the U.S. All of the letters were signed by the Army of God, which has also claimed responsibility for numerous bombings and arsons in the U.S.

Anthrax Hoaxer Receives 30 Years in Prison

Feminist Daily News Wire

January 29, 2002

Anti-abortion extremist and anthrax hoaxer, Clayton Lee Waagner, was sentenced to thirty years in prison Friday for charges related to weapons, theft, and escape charges. Waagner, who has made numerous threats on the lives of abortion providers, awaits charges from federal authorities related to more than 250 anthrax threats he sent reproductive health care facilities in October and November 2001. Citing Waagner's lack of remorse and repeated threats against abortion providers, U.S. Judge Harold Baker handed Waagner the maximum sentence allowed under the law, stating that he felt Waagner was a public threat.

Waagner was apprehended outside a Kinko's in Springdale, Ohio on December 5, 2001 afternoon after a Kinko's employee recognized the fugitive from a U.S. Marshall Service poster. The anti-abortion extremist escaped in February 2001 from an Illinois jail where he was awaiting sentencing on federal firearms violations and automobile theft. Until his arrest, he was listed on the "Most Wanted" lists of the FBI, US Marshal Service, and ATF.

Friends of Terrorism: Bush's Decision to Bring Back Otto Reich Exposes the Hypocrisy of the War Against Terror

by Duncan Campbell February 8, 2002 / Guardian UK

His name may sound like that of a character from a Mel Brooks musical but Otto Reich is real enough. He has just been appointed by President Bush as assistant secretary of state for western hemisphere affairs - and both the manner of his appointment and the role he will now play have profound implications for a part of the world often disregarded since September 11.

Over the last year President Bush has attempted to bring back into office people who were discredited during the US interventions in Central America in the 1980s and 1990s. One such appointment was that of Elliott Abrams, who had two convictions in 1991 for misleading Congress about the so-called Iran-contra affair. He was pardoned by President Bush's father in 1992 and now enjoys the title of head of the "office of democracy and human rights". Another was John Negroponte, the former US ambassador to Honduras, who was accused by his predecessor of turning a blind eye to the atrocities committed there against leftists because it was felt necessary to remain on good terms with the Honduran government. Negroponte was quietly confirmed as US ambassador to the UN shortly after September 11. But the third appointment is by far the most controversial and potentially divisive.

Otto Reich is a rightwing Cuban American whose key policy objective is the overthrow of Fidel Castro's regime and whose support base is the Cuban-American community in Florida. Otto Reich came to prominence during the Reagan administration when he was appointed head of the office of public diplomacy within the state department. According to the National Security Archives, Reich used this role to pursue his own agenda to such an extent that in 1987 the Comptroller-General of the US, a Republican appointee, found that some of the efforts of his office were "prohibited, covert propaganda activities ... beyond the range of acceptable agency public information activities". A letter of September 30 1987 concluded that Reich's office had violated "a restriction on the state department's annual appropriations prohibiting the use of federal funds for publicity or propaganda purposes not authorised by Congress".

He staffed his unit with CIA and Pentagon "psychological warfare" specialists and discredited journalists whose work the Reagan administration did not like. His office wrote bogus editorial pieces under the names of Nicaraguan contras and got them published in the mainstream media. He reported directly to Oliver North. Reich also served as US ambassador to Venezuela and was alleged to have used his influence to try and get a US visa for a convicted terrorist, Orlando Bosch, jailed in Venezuela in 1976 for the bombing of a Cubana airliner with 73 people on board. Bosch had already been convicted of a terrorist attack in Miami on a Polish merchant vessel bound for Cuba and jailed in the US. According to US justice department records: "the files of the FBI and other government agencies contain a large quantity of documentary information which reflects that, beginning in the early 1960s, Bosch held leadership positions in various anti-Castro terrorist organisations ... Bosch has personally advocated, encouraged, organised and participated in acts of terrorist violence in this country as well as various other countries."

Amazingly, Bosch was granted a pardon by George Bush Sr. in 1990 and is now in Florida, apparently untroubled by the current president's commitment to rooting out terrorism in all its forms. Although many countries seek Bosch's extradition he remains free, protected by the same government that warns other countries that they are either for or against terrorism. The Democrats on the Senate foreign relations committee had already made it clear that they would oppose Reich's appointment. So President Bush made a "recess appointment" at the beginning of January, which meant that he could side-step the Senate confirmation and avoid the damaging questions which Reich would be asked.

That a terrorist (by any definition of the word) such as Bosch should receive a blessing from the Bush family is revealing enough. That President Bush has decided to protect Reich from questioning on the subject by avoiding exposing him to the Senate foreign relations committee is just as disturbing. So what has Reich's relationship with Bosch actually been? Ann Louise Bardach, who knows as much about this area as any journalist in the US, writes about Reich in her forthcoming book, *Cuba Confidential:* "a half dozen declassified CIA and state department cables leave little doubt that Reich used his position to lobby for Orlando Bosch, a man who the Bush justice department had concluded had participated in more than 30 terrorist actions."

When the *Guardian* reported the allegations about the Reich-Bosch connection last year, the US deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage wrote to deny the report, insisting Reich had advised that Bosch was ineligible. "It is unfair and destructive to the US democratic process that the president's nominees be pilloried," wrote Armitage. The letter must have made Reich chuckle since he himself was a master of the art of pillorying his opponents through the dishonest use of his office.

But the whole point of the Senate hearings was that these cables and Reich's role in them would have been exposed. Reich has been extremely coy about his relationship with Bosch. In response to the Senate foreign relations committee's question, "Do you consider Orlando Bosch to be a terrorist?", Reich wrote: "I do not have sufficient knowledge of Mr Bosch's criminal activities to pass judgment on his legal status." This is impossible to believe.

Reich later moved into the corporate lobbying business to work on behalf of Bacardi rum, which has paid him $600,000, according to the *New York Times*. Bacardi has an enormous financial stake in the overthrow of Castro, as it would allow them to take over their old distilleries. Although Reich is no longer employed by Bacardi, you do not have to be a cynic to see a dangerous conflict of interest. He also participated in drawing up the Helms-Burton legislation which has fiercely tightened the US embargo on Cuba, a mean-spirited operation that strips Cuba of copyright protection and is opposed by almost every other country in the world.

The contra war which Reich so heartily endorsed was an attempt to overthrow a democratically elected government, often using attacks on civilian targets. The Bosch affair also highlights the strange double standards involved in condoning terrorism against Cubans while abhorring it elsewhere. The US has chosen to keep al-Qaida and Taliban prisoners in Cuba at their Guantanamo Bay base. So while men accused of terrorism are kept on land acquired in an old colonial war and held by force, a safe haven is given to a man happy to promote terrorism against Cuba.

Colombia, Argentina and Peru are in crisis. There are plenty of qualified Latin American hands who could have filled Reich's post and helped build bridges. President Bush's choice is a sad echo of the shabby days that so discredited his father's and Ronald Reagan's administrations in their dealings with Latin America.

Human Rights Watch Report U.S.: Military Aid After 9/11 Threatens Human Rights

(New York, February 15, 2002) Since September 11, the U.S. government has extended new military assistance to governments engaged in serious human rights abuse, including torture, political killings, illegal detention, religious persecution, and attacks on civilians during armed conflict, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today.

The 15-page report, "Dangerous Dealings: Changes in U.S. Military Assistance After September 11," says Congress and the administration have degraded human rights policy by lifting sanctions on arms transfers to countries with poor human rights records and by cutting required approval times for such transfers.

On January 9, for example, the United States rewarded Tajikistan for its support of the war on terrorism by lifting an eight-year-old ban on arms sales to that Central Asian state. Tajikistan has a history of torture, suppression of political opposition and the media, and arrests based on religion.

"These transfers won't make the United States more secure in the long run," said Joost R. Hiltermann, Executive Director of the Arms Division of Human Rights Watch. "And they make the United States complicit in the abuse of civilians in other countries."

In recent months, the United States has made almost daily announcements of foreign military aid, including deliveries of defense equipment, proposed arms sales, financial support, and military training. It has had to lift sanctions on several nations to allow such aid to go through. The United States has also dramatically increased military assistance to old allies that have gained new importance since September 11.

While Human Rights Watch does not take a stand on all transfers of military assistance, it opposes assistance to governments that engage in consistent patterns of gross violations of international human rights and humanitarian law.

Human Rights Watch argues that the United States should carefully monitor its military assistance programs during this time of international conflict and should not loosen controls without regard to human rights consequences.

In October, the United States began delivering weapons and ammunition to anti-Taliban forces in Afghanistan. Although it urged them to respect human rights, the United States made little effort to keep the equipment out of the hands of the worst human rights abusers. Some warlords are now maneuvering to undermine the new Afghan government's efforts to restore the rule of law.

In Central and South Asia, the U.S. government has rewarded political and military support with promises of military assistance. It has failed, however, to condition such aid on improvements in local human rights. Uzbekistan, for example, will receive $43 million in security aid, including $25 million in military assistance and training and $18 million for border security, as a result of its cooperation in the war on terrorism. Uzbekistan has a dismal human rights record, which includes torture and extensive religious persecution.

The effects of the new U.S. policy extend to the rest of the world.

President George Bush in November promised the Philippines $100 million in military aid. The United States has already delivered aircraft and hundreds of small arms and recently began a joint counterterrorism training mission with Philippine troops. In its most recent human rights report, however, the U.S. State Department said abuses by military and police forces include extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, torture, and arbitrary arrest and detention.

In response to its war on terrorism, the United States has also set up mechanisms to "fast-track" military assistance that may help expedite approval of billions of dollars of arms sales to the Middle East, such as a $1.12 billion package of F-16 fighter jets, missiles, and bombs to Oman.

Ecuador and Portugal Ratify the ICC

Feminist Daily News Wire, February 7, 2002

Ecuador and Portugal became the 51st and 52nd countries to ratify the International Criminal Court (ICC) this week, joining the international community in its commitment to prosecuting the most heinous crimes against humanity. The ICC, if established, would be a permanent court designed to prosecute war criminals, genocide in addition to crimes against humanity, which include gender crimes. Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the ICC also presents clear language defining gender crimes to include rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity. Only eight countries are now needed for the ICC to be established. According to the World Federalist Association, the court is expected to become effective by next year.

The United States, however, remains one of the few Western countries not to ratify the ICC. Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) has been leading the opposition to the ICC in the U.S. Helms re-introduced the American Servicemembers Protection Act, which would block U.S. cooperation in the formation of the ICC, penalize countries that ratified the ICC treaty, and allow the use of military force to prevent U.S. soldiers from being tried by the ICC. Helms is not seeking re-election in 2002.

Guatemalan Women Suffer from Companies with U.S Ties

Feminist Daily News Wire

February 19, 2002

Guatemalan women face continual discrimination in maquilas, clothing factories, which routinely prevent women's access to health care. A Human Rights Watch (HRW) report, "From the Household to the Factory: Sex Discrimination in the Guatemalan Labor Force" chronicles how these maquilas target pregnant women for discrimination and deny them maternity benefits dictated by Guatemalan law. According to HRW, 80 percent of maquila workers are women. Their access to reproductive health care is being compromised by unlawful maquila practices.

Several U.S. companies have contracts with maquilas that enforce discriminatory practices inlcuding Target, The Limited, Wal-Mart, GEAR for Sports, Liz Claiborne, and Lee Jeans, all cited by HRW. While these U.S. companies all have policies against discrimination, the reality of the maquila workers, as documented by HRW, shows that discrimination is "persistent" there.

These workers are also not entitled to a minimum wage, an eight-hour workday, or employee-paid health care.

Bush to Increase Funds for Abstinence-Only Programs

Feminist Daily News Wire

January 31, 2002

Despite the lack of scientific evidence to support the effectiveness of abstinence-only sex education programs, President Bush will seek a 33% increase in funding for such programs in the FY 2003 budget. The funding will total $135 million and represent an increase of $33 million over the last year. While HHS Secretary Thommy Thompson, a staunch reproductive rights opponent, admits that there is no evidence that abstinence-only programs work, he points out that they are very popular with the President and others on Capitol Hill.

Abstinence only education programs prohibit discussion of birth control, condoms, and other family planning devices as effective means for preventing sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and unwanted pregnancy. Opponents of such programs cite the lower rates of teen pregnancy and the decreased spread of some STDs in recent years as evidence that more comprehensive sex education programs, such as those promote the use of birth control and condoms for those who are sexually active, are effective and worthy of more resources and public education efforts. Many government officials agree. U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher released a comprehensive report in June 2001 on sexual health advocating a comprehensive approach to sex education that includes distribution of contraception in schools.

No more Mr Scrupulous Guy: *How one of the two brains behind the Iran-Contra scandal this week became one of America's most powerful men*

John Sutherland

February 17, 2002 The Observer UK

Last Wednesday something strange happened. The American population was instructed to panic. Place themselves, that is, on a state of highest vigilance. Some cataclysmic act of terrorism would happen - within hours. But nothing terrible happened. Something creepy did. On Thursday there was an inconspicuous news item. John M Poindexter had been appointed to head a new agency "to counter attacks on the US", such as Wednesday's no-show. It is equivalent, in British terms, to Jeffrey Archer being made chancellor of the exchequer.

The agency which Poindexter will run is called the Information Awareness Office. You want to know what that is? Think, Big Brother is Watching You. IAO will supply federal officials with "instant" analysis on what is being written on email and said on phones all over the US. Domestic espionage. You want to test it out? Text-message any American friend, "Bmb OK. Allah gr8".

The IAO is one of two new offshoots of the Pentagon-based Darpa - the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (it's venerable ancestor, Arpa, invented the internet). The other new agency is called the Information Exploitation Office. Its mission is to supply similarly instant analysis about overseas enemy targets. IEO will employ the computerised sensor networks that have proved so successful in Afghanistan. And, from now on, America - with IEO guiding its smart weaponry - will launch sneak attacks. No more Mr Nice Guy.

IOA and IEO will get a big chunk of the $48bn of the taxpayers' money George Bush is pumping into his war on the evildoers. Never again will it be said that US intelligence agencies went to sleep on the job - or that they were too careful about the American citizen's civil rights to do that job. No more Mr Scrupulous Guy.

Poindexter is frighteningly smart and very unscrupulous. He graduated top of his class at the Naval Academy in 1958 and went on to a PhD in physics at the California Institute of Technology. He returned to uniform as America's best-educated sailor. He wasn't a desk warrior. Poindexter commanded missile destroyers. He won medals to hang alongside his academic diplomas. He is the model for Tom Clancy's hero, Jack Ryan.

After the assassination attempt on President Reagan in 1981, Poindexter was called in to review White House security. Reagan was impressed and appointed him a national security adviser, in 1983, with the rank of vice-admiral.

At this point, things started to go wrong. He and Oliver North were found to be up to their necks in the Iran-Contra (guns for hostages) scam, which blew up in 1986. Poindexter was charged and found guilty of conspiracy, obstruction of justice, and the destruction of evidence in 1990; this was overturned on appeal the following year. The case against them was that they meticulously wiped out 5,000 incriminating emails - but forgot about the back-up tapes. Even smart guys goof sometimes.

Poindexter was also accused by a Costa Rican government commission of being involved in cocaine trafficking to raise funds for the contras, though this was never proved (you can find details in the Guardian, July 22 1989).

His excuse for his behaviour was brazen: "I made a very deliberate decision not to tell the president so that I could insulate him from the decision and provide some future deniability for the president if it ever leaked out." In other words, he gave himself the right to run America's foreign policy behind the back of the commander in chief. Who the hell voted for John M Poindexter?

Both North and Poindexter have gone on to do well. North has a radio chat programme that rivals Rush Limbaugh in rightwing virulence. Poindexter was recruited by Syntek Technologies, a firm in bed with Darpa. His hand was back in the hi-tech cookie jar. As a company vice-president, Poindexter helped develop Genoa - an "intelligence mining, information harvesting" system designed to explore (clandestinely) large computer databases. Listen in on America's electronic conversations, that is.

Poindexter is, once again, one of the most powerful men in America. His job description is "crisis manager". How do you put a man with Poindexter's record back in the manager's box? Well, a spurious crisis would be convenient. Now do you understand what was going on last Wednesday - or must I spell it out for you?

Israel's Growing Peace Lobby Widens Rifts in Sharon's Ranks

by Graham Usher

February 17, 2002 Observer UK (excerpt)

The peace movement in Israel is gathering momentum again in defiance of expectations. Thousands took part in a rally in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square last night to demand that the government withdraw from the occupied territories even as yet another explosion devastated a shopping centre in a Jewish settlement on the West Bank.

The demonstration was the largest by Israel's peace movement since Ariel Sharon was elected Prime Minister a year ago. It represents another breach in the so-called 'consensus of fear' he has marshalled behind his military solutions for ending the Palestinian intifada.

In January, 52 Israeli reserve officers publicly refused to serve in the occupied territories. Insisting that they were 'raised on Zionism and ready to serve in the defence of Israel', they vowed 'not to continue to fight beyond the Green Line' --Israel's pre-1967 border with the West Bank and Gaza--'for the purpose of dominating, expelling, starving and humiliating an entire people'.

A month later, their ranks have swelled to 231, with polls showing 26 per cent of the Israeli public supporting them, a colossally high figure in a political culture where the refusal to serve is often equated with treason.

It is not difficult to fathom the cause of Sharon's decline in support. 'No Israeli seriously believed by electing Sharon it would bring peace. But they did believe he would deliver security. He hasn't,' said Lily Galili, who covers the Russian community for the liberal Haaretz.

Instead, according to Israel's chief of police, Shlomo Aharonishky, he has brought 'a year of violence and terror the likes of which we have not seen in the history of the state'.

Bush Administration to Urge Poor to Marry

The Bush Administration's plans for the nation's welfare system include $100 million for states to encourage their poor to marry. Assistant Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary of Children and Families Wade Horn indicated that the funds could be used to promote pre-marital education and initiatives to "talk about the importance of marriage." Critics of marriage promotion are calling on the administration to focus on reducing poverty, not on encouraging one particular lifestyle or discriminating against single women.

According to NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund (NOW LDEF), 90 percent of welfare recipients are women. None of these women should be coerced into marriage by the government. In a letter to HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson, NOW LDEF states "Marriage does not address the root causes of women's poverty and is not a reliable long term solution to women's poverty." Domestic violence, divorce, and death all jeopardize low-income women, if marriage is touted as a solution to ending poverty. Marriage also does not guarantee a better economic quality of life. Nearly 40 percent of children living in poverty also live in two-parent homes.

AL Chief Justice Deems Homosexuality "An Inherent Evil"

Writing that homosexuality is "abhorrent, immoral, detestable, a crime against nature, and a violation of the laws of nature," Chief Justice Roy Moore of the Alabama Supreme Court concurred with the Court's decision to deny a lesbian mother custody of her children. "The homosexual conduct of a parent…creates a strong presumption of unfitness that alone is sufficient justification for denying that parent custody of his or her own children or prohibiting the adoption of the children of others," said Moore.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State, together with the American Civil Liberties Union, filed a federal lawsuit against Moore for displaying a Ten Commandments monument in the state's judicial building. Americans United also question Moore's judicial ethics, as the Chief Justice allowed right wing TV evangelist D. James Kennedy to film the installation of the Ten Commandments and sell that footage for donations. Moore, according to Americans United, is also scheduled to appear on a summer cruise sponsored by Kennedy to discuss "America's Christian Heritage." Kennedy, head of the reactionary Coral Ridge Ministries and the Center for Reclaiming America, is staunchly opposed to the separation between church and state, which he calls "diabolical."

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Question Authority: Media Finds Protesters an Easy Target, Ignores Erosion of Civil Rights

by Laura Flanders (excerpt) WorkingforChange.com. February 5, 2002

Scanning Saturday night reporting, activists found their message buried in discussions of violence, albeit the lack of it, and footage of violence, when non had materialized. CBS played a clip of a masked man breaking a Starbucks window -- in Genoa, a year ago.

One frustrated activist shared his thoughts Sunday night. "Corporate media coverage of the WEF shows that beliefs that the press would slander us no matter what we did were not unfounded cynicism. No mass media sources covered the issues . . . Perhaps some bystanders were struck by our colorfulness and peacefulness, contrasted with the official depiction of our movement as terrorist, but it seems many people are beyond hope . . ."

"Whose streets? Theirs apparently," wrote this activist. Never again, he vowed to himself, would he participate in a permitted parade where police herded protestors as they would sheep. The next day the writer says he was one of those who took off on a demonstration-dance through the streets of the East Side, blocking traffic. Somebody broke a window at an apartment building said to house a corporate executive. The actions resulted in 150 arrests.

It's too early to say how the progressive press will cover the weekend's events. Media liberal Pete Hamill had no kinder words for the activists in Monday's Daily News. Will there be supportive editorials elsewhere from those who sat the AWIP protest out? I wonder. From talking to new, nervous partipants in the New York march, it's clear that the founding story of this latest mobilization has yet to get beyond a narrow slice of the public. The progressive press owe the public a better accounting of just what "erupted" in Seattle. Who first used violence? Cops or activists? How did those famous windows get broken? Just why did activists start using masks?

"It's time the press stopped questioning the movement and started questioning the state," said Lisa Fithian, bleary-eyed in a cloud of motorcycle exhaust fumes, this Saturday.

She's right. Do you want proof that even in these times -- even in this city -- anti-war, pro-social justice folks can mobilize? You got it. Now cheer, damn it. Cheer and help this movement grow bigger, stronger and even wiser. It's time.

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2 LEGIT 2 QUIT

By Dean Spade (http://www.makezine.org), reprinted from *Piss and Vinegar*

'What was he wearing?'

'He was asking for it!'

'If you're not going to be a REAL MAN, don't use the men's room.'

The most unsettling unexpected consequence of my arrest has been the trans legitimacy and image maintenance conversations it has spurned. People all over the internet seem to be wondering: Is my claim to use the men's room legitimate? Have I failed to meet the conditions of manliness (or transmanliness) such that the arrest was deserved? What do I look like? Trans people and non-trans people alike have been making arguments on list serves, comment boards, and in emails to me with varying levels of blame about my arrest. To some, whether or not I am to blame depends on whether or not what I did was illegal (which it was not). To others, whether or not I am to blame depends on how much I look like a man. And a third set seem to be saying that the fact that this experience happened to me means that it was deserved, because I failed to pass as a man and that is my shortcoming.

Ow. It is awful to be told that something so humiliating, unsettling, violating, and violent was treatment I deserved. But more than that, it is frightening to be finding out the strict limits that people who would identify themselves as trans or trans allies have on what dignity gender non-normative people are entitled to. Am I only entitled to use the bathroom that I want to use if I can 'pass' as a man all the time? If I fail to conform my gender presentation such that I consistently pass as male or female all the time, do I not deserve to pee anywhere? If I don't choose to or can't afford body alteration or the procedures of changing my legal sex, do I not deserve to express my gender identity? One non-trans ally-identified progressive lawyer told me that my public statement expressed too much "outrage." He felt that people wouldn't relate to it because I wasn't understanding enough of the cop's confusion. As he told me this, he continually referred to me as 'she' despite the fact that I've been out to him as 'he' for over a year. Why does he need to defend the cop's confusion in such an egregious case, where I clearly offered the cop the relevant info and was still arrested for nothing? Why am I not entitled to outrage for false arrest, simply because my gender is confusing to him?

The limits of who deserves 'liberation' and under what conditions were particularly noteworthy when I was contacted by City Council Member Christine Quinn's office. Her staff reached out to me about my arrest, pledged support, and offered advice about contacting various service providers. However, less that two weeks later I attended a community board meeting where she was handing out a flyer about how she's working hard to increase police presence and arrests to 'clean up' the West Village streets that are populated by low-income trans youth and people of color. Youth and queer advocates have been loud and visible about the police harassment, brutality, and false arrests of trans and queer low-income people in the gentrified West Village, but Quinn has chosen to champion the interests of yuppie transphobic racists. Apparently, when a white, educated FTM gets arrested in Grand Central, politicians are willing to rally against transphobia, but when queer, low-income trannies and youth are systemically and routinely fucked over by the cops, well, that's just law and order.

This problem of what counts as a 'legitimate' transness, who is entitled to a quest for equality, and how the fight becomes so narrow that it only protects people who aren't usually in harm's way extends also to legal strategies being used to supposedly secure rights and recognition for us. What legal precedent exists about the establishment of gender for transpeople and about our rights is closely and restrictively tied to the medicalized models of gender resistence that already haunt us at every turn. Those who've responded with blame to my arrest have often focused on whether I have an "M" on my license. Although I firmly believe that I would have been arrested even if I had shown I.D. and even if my I.D. had said 'M', I still must observe that the regulatory processes necessary to achieve such a legal gender change are unfathomably fucked up. In many states, a gender change would not be possible without spending the hundreds of thousands of dollars and risking extreme health detriments to have both upper and lower reconstructive surgery (which very few FTMs get both because of expense and the inadequacy of the procedures currently available), a hysterectomy, and taken hormones, and having documentation from medical and psychiatric specialists. Almost none of this is covered by insurance. And beyond all of the implicit classism in that assertion, we have people like me who DON'T WANT a gender-cohesive, gender-normative, state-sanctioned body and mind. How can I invest in a liberation project that requires me to conform to seriously invasive gender-adjusting procedures and processes in order to deserve to pee without false arrest?

Additionally, as we've seen in the recent custody battle in Florida involving an FTM father, when the law does address trans people, it determines our rights based on our ability to conform to a very restrictive version of 'male' or 'female.' In that case, the father has been forced to testify about whether he is capable of penile penetration, and other intimate details, in order to prove his 'manliness' such that his custody rights will apply. Do non-trans men have to prove specific sexual functions in order to get custody rights? As usual, trans people are held to a level of gender conformity that non-trans people never are, erasing the gender diversity that exists among all people, and using trans bodies to legitimize restrictive and sexist gender dichotomies (which we're then blamed for by anti-trans 'feminists' like Janice Raymond, of course).

So, as a trans person, and as a lawyer, how do I resist the contortion of my narrative to fit gender policing ideologies? How do I struggle for trans legal rights, equality, and dignity without engaging in legal narratives that further overdetermine gender difference and 'biology as destiny'? And how do I deal with the pain of rejection and blame from my own supposed community members who see my post-top-op, no hormones, faggy, dykey, pervy appearance as justification for any degradation I run into?

This experience, and the ways in which my body has become a battleground for debate about what constitutes a legitimate trans complaint, who deserves freedom and bathroom access, and whether it is okay that we live in a police state, has only further convinced me of the necessity of a grassroots, unapologetic, non-medicalized, broadly inclusive movement for free gender expression of all people. I see my arrest as intimately linked to movements for public space in New York city, anti-police brutality work, feminism, anti-racism, efforts to end the policing of mothers on public benefits and in public hospitals, queer liberation, the overthrow of capitalism, and resistence to the war on dissent being waged right now. Let's just say, its time for Tranarchy. Whether you know it or not, we're fighting for your freedom, and we're fighting to win.

February 5, 2002 Common Dreams

Two World Forums: Ideology vs. Pragmatism?

by Mark Weisbrot

PORTO ALEGRE, Brazil -- Bankers and billionaires, their hangers-on and friends in government now have some serious competition when they gather -- as they did this past weekend in New York City -- for their annual World Economic Forum. The shadow forum down South is less exclusive -- nobody pays $25,000 to get in to the World Social Forum, and you don't need an invitation. But the 70,000 people who flocked to this waterfront Brazilian city of 1.2 million from every corner of the globe were greeted by an appealing theme: "Another World is Possible."

It is common to dismiss such thinking as naive or utopian at best, or driven by ideology rather than practicality. The hard-headed CEO's, IMF disciplinarians, and associated politicians at the WEF are seen as pragmatic leaders, even visionaries, who are willing to make the "tough choices" and compromises necessary to achieve progress in the real world.

But perhaps the conventional wisdom has it backwards. Here in Porto Alegre, the Workers' Party -- a major participant in the World Social Forum -- has run the city government for 12 years. They win by large majorities because they have proven that the left can govern: they cleaned up corruption and waste, instituting a participatory budget process that is a model of transparency and democratic process.

The city has seen falling crime rates, improved health and education, and a noticeably more equal distribution of income than other Brazilian cities. For the last two years the Workers' Party has also held the governorship of the state (Rio Grande do Sul).

Of course there is still poverty -- this is Brazil, a middle-income country with the worst inequality in the world. But just an hour by bus from Porto Alegre, you will find people who have a sensible solution, and are putting it into practice. Sidnei dos Santos, a farmer and organizer with the MST (Movement of the Landless), explains to a group of about 80 visitors from the WSF how the Capela cooperative is run.

One hundred families farm these 5400 acres together and share the proceeds of this verdant, fertile land. Nobody gets rich, but no one goes hungry -- as do millions of other Brazilians who remain landless and unemployed. The MST farmers look strong and healthy, with dignity and pride and a missionary's zeal for the righteousness of their cause. They feed their visitors fresh meat, and vegetables and fruit (grown without pesticides), and seem genuinely moved by the warmth and solidarity that the conferees bring from afar.

The MST is the largest and most successful land reform movement in the world, having settled 300,000 families on millions of acres of land. In a country with vast amounts of unused arable land, and millions of hungry, landless peasants, what could make more sense?

But land reform is not on the agenda of the World Economic Forum, nor are these leaders impressed with the Workers' Party as an

Cont. next page

February 13, 2002 Common Dreams

The Bush Administration's Folly: Arrogance of Arms Abroad and Access to Avarice at Home

by Tom Turnipseed

The European Union commissioner in charge of international relations attacked U.S. foreign policy under the Bush Administration as having a dangerously "absolutist and simplistic" attitude toward our allies and other members of the global community. Chris Patten, the EU commissioner, who is a former Conservative Party chairman in Britain, also told a London newspaper that it was time for EU governments to speak up and stop the U.S. before it goes into "unilateralist overdrive". In an interview with the Guardian, Mr. Patten was particularly incensed by President Bush's characterization of Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as an "axis of evil" in his State of the Union address. He described the phrase as very "unhelpful" and hard to believe as a "thought-through policy". The European Union is working on a trade and cooperation agreement with Iran and Mr. Patten emphasized that the long-standing European policy of "constructive engagement" with Iranian moderates and North Korea is more likely to bring results than the increasingly belligerent tone of Washington.

The European leader was critical of Washington's insistence on destroying terrorism but not in ending terrorism's causes. He said that "smart bombs have their place but smart development assistance seems to me even more significant". Patten said the dramatic success of the U.S.-led military operation in Afghanistan has fed a new U.S. mood of "intense triumphalism" and he encouraged the EU states to go their own way on global issues from climate change to the Middle East.

President Vladimir Putin of Russia was also critical of Bush's "axis of evil" rhetoric as applied to Iraq, and warned against the U.S. going it alone against Iraq. Putin told Wall Street Journal reporters in the Kremlin that Iraq is "completely different" from Afghanistan and must not become a target for unilateral U.S. military action. Russia has billions invested in the economy of Iraq and Mr. Putin said that Russia was willing to work on "problems" through the United Nations, where Russia has a permanent seat on the Security Council, but such "problems cannot be solved by one country alone".

The Wall Street Journal also reported from northern Iraq, where the country's 3.6 million Kurds reside, that the Kurdish population is wary of joining with the U.S. in military action against Iraq because the Kurds are prospering now. The region's minister of reconstruction said, "It's a golden age. It has never been better for the Kurds in 4,000 years". The Kurds want assurances that they will receive formalization of their current autonomy but the U.S. will not give them such assurances because of Turkey's bitter opposition. The Kurds would like to see Saddam Hussein deposed but they also remember that the U.S. turned its back on them in 1991 after promising them protection as we also did in 1975 after covertly supporting their rebellion. Massoud Barzani, the leader of one of the two Kurdish regions in northern Iraq said, "We will not be a party to any project that will endanger what we have achieved".

In an article headlined "Armed to the Teeth" the London Observer questions the "awesome increase" in military spending championed by Bush when the U.S. now "enjoys military and cultural power unrivaled since the days of the Roman emperors". It reports that Paul Kennedy of Yale University estimates the U.S. is already responsible for 40% of the world's military spending-the equivalent of more each year than the next 9 largest national defense budgets combined. As the U.S. budget is busted by buying such wasteful weaponry, the Enron collapse is causing a crisis in confidence in corporate accounting for investors who won't take the risks if they don't believe the numbers.

Our government's capability to curb corporate fraud and corruption was the issue when my U.S. Senator, Fritz Hollings, called for a Special Counsel to investigate Enron and said he had never "witnessed a corporation so extraordinarily committed to buying government" in his 35 years in the Senate. In the past ten years Enron gave contributions to 186 House members and 71 Senators, including $3,500 to Hollings. In the 2000 election, Enron gave over $700,000 to Mr. Bush and the Republicans. Senator Hollings candidly criticized the increasingly prevalent practice of corporate America "buying" our government with campaign contributions and cited serious conflicts of interest at the Justice Department and White House that justify the appointment of a Special Counsel. Aftershocks from the biggest bankruptcy in history at Enron caused questioning of accounting practices and market jitters that led to the bankruptcy of other companies like Global Crossing, the 4th largest in U. S. history with rumors rampant of more to come. Senator Hollings described a top executive's suicide, the shredding of documents, and the taking of the 5th Amendment by other top executives as more of the "extraordinary circumstances" under which a Special Counsel can also be appointed.

The U.S. House of Representatives is taking up the Shays-Meehan Bill that is a step toward campaign finance reform by limiting large amounts of unlimited donations known as soft money. The White House is embroiled in the Enron imbroglio of campaign contribution corruption and needs cover on the bill. White House operatives are using the Republican Party, led by its chairman and former Enron lobbyist, Marc Racicot, in a back door attempt to scuttle the bill by encouraging Republican House members to make "poison pill" amendments that will finally weaken or kill the bill outright. The arrogant administration of George W. Bush is killing confidence in our government at home and abroad.

In Tehran, Iran, where just months ago pro-Western demonstrators marched and shouted "death to the mullahs", millions of marchers galvanized by Bush's "axis of evil" comments chanted "death to America" and "death to Bush".

Tom Turnipseed is an attorney, writer and civil rights activist in Columbia, South Carolina.

The State of the Union and the New Cold War

by Rahul Mahajan

Commondreams.org February 1, 2002

Any who doubted the characterization of the war on terrorism as a new Cold War had only to listen to the State of the Union address, Bush's most depressing speech since he launched his unlimited war with his address to a joint session of Congress on September 20, 2001.

The following points, all stunningly reminiscent of the 1950's and early 1960's, are easily discerned from the text of the speech:

We are once again a beacon of civilization, on a higher moral plane than others, opposing absolute evil -- not only did Bush refer twice to the "civilized world," meaning us and our close allies, we also learn that Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, along with their "terrorist allies" constitute an "axis of evil." In a stunning display of hypocrisy, Bush even indicted Iraq for attempting to weaponize anthrax, something the United States has been doing itself. Although couched in universalist terms -- "the rule of law, limits on the power of the state, respect for women, private property, free speech, equal justice and religious tolerance" -- this renewed, over cultural supremacism is no less odious than that of the supposedly bygone colonial era.

We assert as forcefully as we did in the days of fighting the "international Communist conspiracy," that the war on terrorism allows us to intervene wherever we like, if we so choose -- "some governments will be timid in the face of terror. And make no mistake: If they do not act, America will." Once again, any development anywhere is a threat to our national security, and "all nations should know: America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security."

We need permanently higher military budgets in order to "defend" ourselves (with useless and expensive high-tech programs like missile defense and the joint-strike fighter, not with ways to defend against realistic terrorist attacks) -- "My budget includes the largest increase in defense spending in two decades, because while the price of freedom and security is high, it is never too high: whatever it costs to defend our country, we will pay it." Bush's proposed new military budget is $379 billion, an increase of $48 billion over the already unexpectedly high 2001 budget -- the increase alone is larger than any other nation's military budget.

We are once again beset by internal enemies -- "And as government works to better secure our homeland, America will continue to depend on the eyes and ears of alert citizens." This is not yet at the level of the House Un-American Activities Committee hearings and pamphlets on how to tell if your neighbor is a communist that characterized the 1950's, but it is a significant step closer.

Our "economic security" is essential to our national security, so disagreements on economic policy and on how high corporate profit should be must be submerged to an artificial national unity. Congress must pass an energy policy that involves more drilling for oil in the United States, must give the president Trade Promotion Authority (popularly known as fast-track) in concluding "free trade" agreements, and must make the Bush tax cut permanent -- all in the name of security.

We are called once again to sacrifice for a very particularly conceived "national good" -- "My call tonight is for every American to commit at least two years 4,000 hours over the rest of your lifetime to the service of your neighbors and your nation." The newly created USA Freedom Corps needs volunteers to help preserve our "homeland security." The call for citizens to do some form of public service, in itself, is not a bad thing, but the choice to ask them to prepare for possible terrorist attacks instead of trying to provide education, housing, and social services to people who need them is abou attempting to mobilize the time and energy of the people in the service of the existing power structure and about co-opting other kinds of popular mobilization.

In sum, the war on terrorism will involve more frequent military interventions, with less of an attempt to placate international sensibilities, and with the constant excuse of protecting American security. It will involve more overt appeals to Western cultural supremacy, although couched in universalist terms. It will involve more arms proliferation and a growth of military spending, and a lessening of democracy in this country, both in terms of the public's ability to affect decisions and in terms of individual freedom to dissent from the course advocated by dominant institutions.

If this were the whole story, it would be a very depressing one. But excess inevitably produces a reaction and empires sooner or later overreach themselves.

This country has already seen an antiwar movement spring up with unprecedented speed, in the aftermath of September 11. Twin upcoming events, the planned protests at the World Economic Forum in New York, and the gathering of an estimated 50,000 people at the "alternative" World Social Forum (in its second year already far larger than the WEF) will signify the depth and breadth of resistance to the renewed projects of American imperial domination and domestic social control articulated in Bush's speech.

If the power fantasies of the Bush administration are met with renewed and increased popular mobilization, the frightening world envisioned in the State of the Union address may not come to pass.

Rahul Mahajan serves on the National Boards of Peace Action and the Education for Peace in Iraq Center, and is a member of the Nowar Collective (www.nowarcollective.com). He is the author of the forthcoming "The New Crusade: America's War on Terrorism."

Cont. from last page.

alternative to the rampant corruption of their friends in government throughout Latin America. They have their own formula for the progress of humanity: open your country to foreign trade and investment, privatize everything that can be taken out of the public sector, and swallow the IMF's bitter prescription of austerity when -- because of skittish foreign investors or other external circumstances beyond your control -- your economy ends up in crisis.

Argentina is the latest casualty of this dogma, which is considered "economically correct" in WEF circles. For 20 years these people have used their economic muscle, and a creditors' cartel headed by the IMF, to make the world conform to their textbooks. The result has been the most widespread economic failure since the Great Depression.

During the last two decades (1980-2000), the world's low and middle-income countries have seen their income per person grow at less than half the rate of the previous 20 years (1960-1980). Even ignoring the distribution of income, which has worsened in many countries, there just hasn't been much that could potentially "trickle down" to the poor. Yet our leaders cling to their sacred texts; at this moment they are still trying to pry open the jaws of Argentina to pour more of the hated austerity medicine down its throat.

Who are the stubborn ideologues, and who are the pragmatists? Who is offering practical alternatives to the madness of a world that has more than enough food and resources for everyone, but where 800 million people are malnourished, and tens of millions die each year from hunger and easily preventable diseases? These are the questions that American journalists should be asking.

Mark Weisbrot is co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research (www.cepr.net), in Washington, DC.

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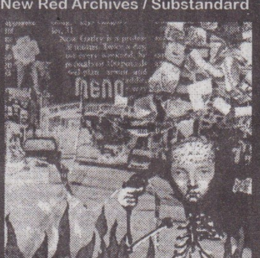

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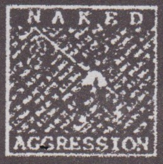

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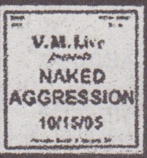

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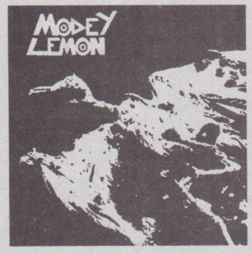

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SCENES

ST PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

Slowly but surely I turn into a machine for writing scene reports. I already did dozens of them (especially if we count the ones that were printed in several languages), and I pump them out on a steady basis. So please excuse my (probable) lack of inspiration!!. This one scene report is intended to be a bit in-depth and I even did a bit of research. Well, enough of licking my own armpits, on to business. St Petersburg has been founded in 1703 on the swampy banks of the river Neva, where it falls into the Gulf of Finland. The czar who founded the city, Peter The Great, made it a capital in 1712 - a status which the city held until 1918. It was renamed Petrograd in 1914 after the war with Germany started, and in 1924 it got a new name, Leningrad, in honor of Vladimir Lenin who led the (relatively) successful worker's revolution in 1917. During World War II, Leningrad was besieged by Finns and Germans for 900 days, which led to millions of deaths through hunger and cold. The city was and still is Russia's second biggest, the population at one point reached 5 million people but then started to decline. In 1991, after the Soviet Union fell apart, Leningrad has got its historical name back. By then it already had a bit of punk scene and a punk club TaMtAm has been started... Of the early Leningrad punk bands the one that still exists AND still plays punk rock is BRIGADNY PORDYAD. They started in mid-eighties and back then were one of the more powerful musically and radical lyrically bands, with songs against bureaucracy, the rich, etc. They eventually stopped playing around 1990 and for a while were only recording home albums of funny pop music. In mid-nineties the band was revived, then the original singer Kolya Mikhailov got in an accident that damaged his brain, and their bassist Sasha Konviser has become a new frontman, BRIGADNY PODRYAD's two CDs are recorded with him. One album that is great and classic is "Vsyo - Pank-Rok!" from 1988, it was re-released on tape. Another punk band that started even earlier is called NARODNOE OPOLCHENIE - but I'm not certain if they still perform. They are more like urban legends, seen in the city center gathering empty bottles. The releases include two CDs and a couple of tapes. NARODNOE OPOLCHENIE's co-founder Fyodor Lavrov is now playing with his own band called BEGEMOT (his nickname). The music is pretty good power pop sometimes bordering on melodic punk. They have several CDs out, on one of them Fedya's band was called TCHAIKOVSKY. If we talk about ska-punk in St Petersburg, the first band that comes to mind is SPITFIRE (Denis Kuptsov, Grechesky 17-10, St Petersburg, 193130,Russia / ewelina@unitel.spb.ru /http://www.spitfire.spb.ru). They have a couple of CDs out on German label PorkPie, 7"EP on Swedish Zorch Productions and they were on a great number of compilations, including some on the late Moon Records of NYC. They are very popular, yet they still do things to support the independent punk scene in the city, like helping distribute the zines, etc. Among their side projects there is an ensemble called ST PETERSBURG SKA JAZZ REVIEW (SPITFIRE address) - the name speaks for itself, although I doubt many ska jazz bands play SEX PISTOLS covers. They should have a CD out early 2002 on Zvezda Records (http://www.zvezdarec.com), local indie label. Another band that's supposed to have a release with them soon is BONDZINSKY (Dmitry Petrov, nab. Fontanki 5-35, St Petersburg, 191011, Russia / mamka2000@mail.ru / http://www.bondzinsky.spb.ru). They are playing great experimental / jazzy hardcore and they have saxophone in the lineup. One of St Petersburg's oldest hardcore bands, they have existed for almost ten years and had tons of lineup changes. They only had one tape album back in 1996. The guy who sang with BONDZINSKY on that album, Andrey Mashnin, is the leader of MASHNINBAND (mashninband@yahoo.com / http://www.mashninband.spb.ru). It's rather an alternative band, "rapcore" as this style is known over here, but the things that set MASHNINBAND apart are somewhat dark and always excellent lyrics and pretty interesting music, sometimes epic in a NOMEANSNO vein. They are very apolitical but seem to have a bit of right-wing following. Releases include a tape and two CDs. While on the subject of "rapcore", I gotta mention DAY PISTOLET! Their lyrics are more political / social, and they seem to be concerned with the state of the world around them. Half the band are Buddhists. They have a tape and a CD (which is more electronic).

Now, back to our program. 5 UGLOV (5corners@mail.ru) play metally NYHC-style music with dual vocals and lyrics in Russian and English common for this genre. They are powerful although a bit too moshcore for my taste. Played with the likes of SOULFLY, BIOHAZARD here. They have two tape EPs. Their drummer plays in THE STRAWBERRY JAM, fast hardcore band with lyrics in English. I suspect their lyrics of being sexist, but I have yet to see a lyric sheet. They are originally from Magadan in the Russian Far East, but they moved here a few years ago they have one tape. BAMPER also clings to NYHC sound, although they are not as moshy and I think a lot of lyrics are in Russian. I only saw them live once. If i'm not mistaken, they have a demo.

The DIY activist scene has yet to produce hardcore bands, but I know there are some that rehearse. On to punk rock. DEKABR (dekabr@pisem.net / http://www.dekabr.cool.ru) play great melodic punk with powerful vocals. If you heard Russian rock band DDT, then you'll know what kind of voice I'm talking about. Nice band, nice people. They have a demo and are looking for someone to put their album out. Their bassist used to play in G.X.F.!! (according to some variants, stands for a hilarious name: GREAT EXCELLENT FUCKERS), which is very fast punk rock with ska bits and lyrics in Russian and Pigeon-English. Great live band. G.X.F.!! ex-guitarist formed a new ska-punk / pop-punk band with English name NO GUN (funserg@online.ru) and mostly Russian lyrics. IGRAY, GARMON'! (Roma Izmailov, PO Box 17, St Petersburg, 198332, Russia / ipecacuanha@mail.ru) is a new band that plays a mix of ska, punk and folk. They are recording the demo now. URBAN TARZAN are playing interesting "ethnocore" thingie. Their singer Dima is an old TaMtAm guy. Not exactly St Petersburg, but related - I need to mention the town of Vyborg. It is situated near the Finnish border, some 80 thousand people live there - and a bunch of punks. The reason why it's mentioned here isn't the castle (which was founded by Swedes in 1293) or the very beautiful park "Monrepo", but the local bands (they play in St Petersburg as or more often than in their hometown). First in line is PTVP (Lyoha Nikonov, Dekabrista Lunina 4-14, Vyborg, Leningradskaya obl., 188900, Russia / ptvp@freemail.ru / http://www.mp3.com/ptvp). They started in the mid-nineties with sorta acid-noise sound not dissimilar to BUTTHOLE SURFERS. Their first drummer, by the way, was late Edik "Redt" Starkov, the leader of St Petersburg band CHIMERA - which was and probably will forever remain Russia's best and most original hardcore band. Anyway, PTVP later switched to great melodic punk with wonderful poetic lyrics - which they still play. One CD, two tapes, one split tape, and soon a remix tape. People interested in putting their stuff out are welcome to get in touch. PTVP's new drummer Den is a teenage genius who also plays in SVK (Vetalya Grebenshikov, Primorskoe shosse 32-43, Vyborg, Leningradskaya obl., 188900, Russia / viipunks@pisem.net). The band members originally got together when they were 13 or 14 years old, and they play blazing fast and very tight hardcore-punk with political lyrics in Russian. One of Russia's best bands - they really deserve to be on a record. A demo, a track on a compilation tape and a new demo soon. There are a few more punk bands in Vyborg - ART-TESTER (noisy junk-influenced punk), TAK VONYAYUT OKROVAVLENNYE TAMPAKSY (female-fronted) etc.,but I know little of them. Ex-PTVP drummer Velmita started a new electronic band called PESNJA SERDTSA (info@vyborg.ru). Now, St Petersburg again, though mostly experimental stuff from now on. SCAFANDR (vosduh@mail.ru / http://www.skafandr.ru) can be considered to be a post hardcore band. Their sound is influenced by modern hardcore bands as well as by electronic styles, but in its most skeletal form it can be described as dub-metal. They are an instrumental trio since the spring of 2001, when their singer Anya left the band after recording a cassette single "8-812". They have a bunch of split tapes coming out soon and are planning a tour of Eastern Europe in April. Anyone into putting vinyl / CDs out? Their friends from MORE I RELSY have started with pop punk / pop grunge but according to recent reports they play REFUSED cover in their live set. Their fellows from F-NOISE (fnoisedes@yandex.ru) are playing digital hardcore like ATARI TEENAGE RIOT. The differences being, half the lyrics are in Russian, there are some breakbeat elements, and there is slightly less noise in their sound, whatever the name may imply. They havea full-length CD demo What they lack in the noise department is compensated by TALONOV NET (Philipp Wolokitin, Opochinina 5-20, St Petersburg, 199106, Russia / trilobit@mailru.com / http://www.trilobit666.narod.ru). They tend to sound like the most extreme harsh noise (MERZBOW, etc. can be a reference point), very fast, very noisy, very screamy. They are funny, too. Their singer also plays in JAZZILLA (TALONOV NET address), which is a project that unites people from various cities in Central Russia playing scratchcore (vocals are also pretty similar to MELT-BANANA). I heard they have a split 7" coming out in Japan, but I'm not certain. I'm positive though they should be on a split tape with RAI KO RIS from Nepal as I'm putting that one out! JAZZILLA have a demo and a radio recording (on which their style is described by the term scooby-dooby jazz). Some TALONOV NET people were / are also playing in ZLOY POP (Sergey Tyurin, Industrialny 20/1-285, St Petersburg, 195426, Russia / upopabyla@pisem.net / http://www.zlojpop.narod.ru). They are a post punk band with obvious punk and noise leanings, folk elements (accordion) and lyrics mainly about frogs and turtles in Russian and French. A few demos and a split tape with Latvian punk / pop band SPICHKI I KEDI. Their guitarist plays in ANKYLYM (Roma Pavlov, Коммunalnaya 11-48, Pskov, 180007, Russia / http://www.ankylym.narod.ru) which is a weirdo "eskimo" punk band. Demo available. To make this list of TALONOV NET-related projects semi-complete, I should also mention RTUT (softunderground@rambler.ru), experimental post punk (which they call disco-avantgarde for some reason). Among other people it features Edik, ex-bassist of DOLBI SISTEMU - St Petersburg's first anarchist punk band. RTUT has some demo stuff. And they are interesting to look at.

Some bands I'm not much into are KOROL I SHUT ("Aren't we all nationalists", they say to the audience), MARRADYORY (who are on hideous labels), PORT 812 (BLINK 182), 1,5 KG OTLICHNOGO PYURE (NOFX) etc., who have to varying degrees made themselves a part of thecommercial rock scene. There is a bunch of younger pop punk bands, like BER-LINN, KURKI, FAKUBICHI etc., but I know too little about them to judge. Generally, I'm not into this scene of not-give-a-fuck'ers. Some bands who are influenced by '82 "britcore" scene such as VIBRATOR (old punks with incredibly brainless lyrics), THE PAUKI (old beer punk/ psycho band, with releases on some nazi-tolerant labels), KARIES (can be contacted through NotLG address), POH'YERS (from Vyborg, with pro-life lyrics) - are making too little effort to part with their right-wing following / image - that's something I'm not too keen on. Thankfully, there are no white power bands at the moment in St Petersburg. Moscow Nazi bands sometimes try to play here but half the time their gigs get canceled. The most recent one was when Moscow's KOLOVRAT was going to play here with, among others, BIROTSEFALY - they were a very cool thrash band in early 90s, one of their singers was kicked out of the band for becoming a Nazi, then they split up. A few years later this guy Gans got the band together again. They seem to have no political lyrics and generally are sucky (their new tape is utter crap techno - but try to find their "Bormashina" demo from 1992), but I think they're more right-wing now than I can tolerate.

Learning Russian: "Panks not ded!" - Punk's not dead! "Hardkor - kruto!" - Hardcore is cool!

PSYCHOBILLY / GARAGE

The city of St Petersburg has historically had quite a bit of rock-'n'roll things going, rockabilly, psychobilly, you name it. Rockabilly in many of its shapes and forms is still very popular as bar music. Psycho seems to be declining in popularity. The garage scene has never really been big. SCARY B.O.O.M. [=Scary Band Of Original

Music] (c/o Scary B.O.O.M., Korol Plyusch Pub, Engelsa 111-1, St Petersburg, 194354, Russia / kirill@scaryboom.com / http://www.scaryboom.com) is playing its own brand of music that they call “scarybilly”; it combines psycho, rock, funk, ska, etc. Their album “Food Of The Gods” has been released as CD / LP on Revel Yell label in Japan and as tape / CD on Manchester Files here; their latest release is a collaboration with writer Ilya Stogoff - spoken word / music album “Kuala Lumpur”. Kirill, band’s leader, has produced three compilations of local bands - the series was called “Psychoburg” and included cassette (“Psychoburg Aboriginals”), videotape (“Picnic On The Roadside”) and CD (“Psychoburg: The Happy End”). He is now looking for bands to join a worldwide scarybilly compilation. Other bands in the city with relation to psycho scene include BOMBERS, who are now - after the addition of a second guitarist - moving towards a METEORS-like sound (by the way, THE METEORShave recently released a live CD recorded in St Petersburg.), yet they still keep the surf elements. MOSQUITO are one of the few psycho bands here who have an album out - it’s called “Mosquito Wants Your Blood” and is released by local label Mikadox Records. THE POACHERS are a psycho band with female vocals.

As for garage, THE SODS (joefly@mail.ru) are playing MC5 / VELVET UNDERGOUND influenced sixties rock with keyboards, mainly covers. They have at least one demo tape. YELLOW PILLOW, another bar band, has garage songs in their set. PIKES is a side project of SPITFIRE members - they are originally from that nostalgic scene. They only play occasionally. (Information in this section was mainly provided by Kirill Ermichov of Scary B.O.O.M.)

Learning Russian: “Rok-n-roll po-russki - eto vsyo ravno chto romans po-kitayski.” - Rock’n’roll in Russian is like crooning in Chinese. “Pivo, devki, rok-n-roll.” - Beer, chicks, rock’n’roll.

ZINES / LABELS / DISTROS

SzSS (Dmitrij Ivanov, PO Box 30, St Petersburg-9,195009, Russia / iq0@pisem.net / http://www.come-armageddon.com) is my label. I’m mostly doing pro-dubbed tapes. Among the releases, two PTVP albums; “We All Are Positive” compilation with hardcore bands from ex-USSR; SPICHKI I KEDI / ZLOY POP split - indie / punk from Latvia and Russia; TOXIC NARCOTIC “89-99” hc-punk from Boston, MA; SC - experimental hardcore from Lithuania; JAZZILLA / RAI KO RIS split - scratchcore from Russia vs punk rock from Nepal; and a couple of releases that aren’t for distribution in the US, Japan and Western Europe - CLUSTER BOMB UNIT (crustcore from Germany) tape and Havoc Records Cassette Sampler. A lot more is planned, be on the lookout. I also distribute a bunch of stuff, mostly tapes, but also CDs / EPs / zines. Nozhi I Vilki aka “Knives + Forks (SzSS address) is the zine that we started back in 1998, we made 5 issues on our own and the latest one was part of a compilation zine Eurobottle. It is written in Russian, tends to get bigger and bigger (both in terms of number of pages and print run) with time, and covers the worldwide punk / hardcore / diy scene. NotLG Records (Kirill Mihailov, PO Box 51, St Petersburg, 198332, Russia / notlg@pisem.net) is another stronghold of diy punk here. Dhordzh had originally started doing tapes in 1997 and had since produced some releases of experimental stuf (“My Home Is My Castle” hometaping compilation tape, SODRUZHESTVO KONTSENTRIROVANNYH PSEVDOKONEY / H END /SALIKAPALIKAU / SNARK 4-way split tape / CD-R), some weirdo garage rock by GLINYANYE MUZHICHKI I SANBERMEK PORUBAYA (not that they’re into all that SONICS / STOOGES thing, they actually record in a garage-like conditions), and some great hc / punk releases (PTVP / NAPRASNAYA YUNOST split tape, “Concrete Jungle Guerrillas” compilation with crust / raw punk, and re-issue of Two Beard Is Weird Records’ compilations of Baltic punk - “Peasants With Pitchforks” LP and “Weird System” EP - on one tape). He also distributes a lot of cheap tapes, some zines, plus an occasional CD or two.

Ipecacuanha Records (IGRAY, GARMON’! address) did three releases so far, PTVP (see above), DR GREEN (ska-punk from Lithuania) and VIA ZUNAME (punk rock in Portuguese, from Moscow) tapes. Roma plans some more things but you have to ask him personally. A bit of a distro, too. Roma from Ipecacuanha and Dzhordzh from NotLG are starting a new zine - it’s called Get Up! Mostly punk and hardcore content, from what I hear. Should be out early 2002.Kangaroof Distro (Sasha Volkov, Svetlanovsky 57-30, St Petersburg, 194064, Russia / kangaroof@pisem.net) is a small distro of all styles of underground music, focused mostly on trades - Russian stuff (on CDs, tapes, records) against your hc / punk / grind / metal things. Red Tapes (Nadya Kositskaya, Shkolnaya 128/1-149, St Petersburg, 197374, Russia / sovietpunk1980-1991@list.ru / http://www.sovietpunk1980-1991.cjb.net) is a small label that’s mostly doing unauthorized releases - they did a compilation tape with punk bands from the Soviet times and a Lyoha Nikonov (from PTVP) acoustic album on cassette. 1-Touch Recordings (TALONOV NET address) is mostly putting out weirdo, extreme noise and experimental stuff in limited editions, lately they tend to be putting out stuff in weird formats (this year they started a micro-cassette series, etc.). The zine they (TALONOV NET) do has been changing names a couple of times, I heard that the new issue of Animal-Shaped Biscuits In My Soup will be done in summer 2002 and will be all in English. The contents are getting, as ol’ Alice in Wonderland used to say, “Curiouser and curiouser”. It’s very well written though. Also I heard that they will be doing a monthly newsletter called Zveryushki but I have not seen an issue yet. Voice (Egor Rogalyov, PO Box 165, St Petersburg, 191025, Russia / voicezine@mail.ru) is a great quality hardcore zine with two issues out, columns / interviews / reviews in Russian. One of the guys who helped do it published one issue of his zine In A Free Land back in the day and is now planning to make a new zine called Ahimsa (Pavel Sasin, do vostrebovanija, St Petersburg, 195298, Russia / friland@mail.ru). I am positive it’s gonna be in Russian and have mostly personal / art content. Vesyolye Botinki (PO Box 63, St Petersburg, 198260, Russia) is dedicated to archaic forms of rock-’n’roll - psycho, rockabilly and fifties legends too. Good quality publication, if you’re into the music and can understand the bloody language we use here, it’s a pity that I haven’t see a new issue in a few months. Pafos (Zemine, PO Box 26, St Petersburg, 192289, Russia / pafos_zine@mail.ru), they did three issues - of which one was about feminism (the editor’s a girl DJ), the other contained only poetry, while the third has been all about hemp. I’m not certain if that is supposed to continue. (Oh again it’s in Russian).

As for stuff to avoid (label-wise), I’d say that Crazy Rat/Fen’ka Rock’n’roll releases are pretty dubious (plus, they pirate stuff). On a country-wide level, KTR and Ur-realist labels are outright fascist (plus some Nazi skin labels, Kolovrat NS, TS-42, etc.), while Hobgoblin, Hor Music, Solnze Records, Neuro Empire have no problem putting out right-wing / nationalist / Nazi bands - along with some apolitical or left-leaning ones.

VENUES

No DIY venues, but we’re working on that. The city has a pretty active club scene though, some of the clubs are pretty cool. I’d mention the underground rock club “Moloko” (Perekupnoy 12, metro station (or m.) Pl. A. Nevskogo / http://moloko.piter.net / +7(812)2749467), cool bar “Fish Fabrique” (Ligovsky 53, m. Pl. Vosstaniya / http://fishfabrique.spb.ru), bomb shelter-based rock club “Front” (Chernyakhovskogo 31, m. Ligovsky Pr. / +7(812)1645050), etc. Some are opening some are closing down, some change the policy, and there’s too many to mention, honestly. The one to be suspicious of is “Polygon”, as they provide stage to bands such as GRAZHDANSKAYA OBORONA from Omsk (who were an anarchist band in the eighties but later switched to nationalism). There is a website (in Russian) that has listings / descriptions of most clubs in the city - http://spbclub.ru. For listings in English, check out http://www.sptimes.ru or seek the Friday edition of “St Petersburg Times” (it’s free newspaper in English). In order to get gigs here, it is advisable to first contact the appropriate people in the zines / labels section and ask what can be done and how. Because of problems with visas, few bands from abroad make it to St Petersburg - especially if we don't count the likes of THE EXPLOITED.

Learning Russian: "Vpishite menya" - Put me on the guest list "Skolko?" - How much?

RECORD SHOPS

Tapes are the most popular format, mainly because they are cheap - about 20 rubles. As for vinyl, the majority of stuff sold at stores was produced ten or more years ago. Only DJ vinyl can be bought as new releases. The prices for used locally-produced LPs range from 10 to 20 rubles, imported ones cost between 100 and 500 rubles generally. Besides the CDs that contain legally produced material, there is a huge market of pirated CDs. You can get anything from Dead Kennedys to John Zorn. Most CDs are around 60-70 rubles apiece, though some may cost up to 200 rubles. For a new imported CD it's not unusual to cost 500-700 rubles. The shops that I personally like include "Karavan" (Karavannaya 22, m. Nevsky pr.) - good selection of tapes, one of the few stores that does not carry racist stuff; "Rock Island" (Kirochnaya 8, m. Chernyshevskaya) - mainly deals with used vinyl; "Soyuz" (ul. Vosstaniya 13, m. Pl.Vosstaniya) - huge selection of expensive imported CDs, quite a lot of punk rock. "Kailas" (Pushkinskaya 10, m. Mayakovskaya) - good selection of mainly pirated CDs.

Learning Russian: "Mozhno postavit'?" - Can this be put on? "A vy prodayote vinil?" - Do you sell vinyl?

VEGGIE CAFES

Seems like St Petersburg has more vegetarian cafes than any other city in Russia. The most expensive one is called "Idiot" and is mainly oriented towards foreigners. Has books to read and outrageous prices (Nab. Moiki , m. Sadovaya) Another one which is more affordable and has more vegan options than any other cafe in the city is Bistro Guche. Pretty hi-class but not irritating.(Vladimirsky 3, m. Mayakovskaya and Moskovsky —, m. Frunzenskaya). Another network is Troitsky Most, the prices are about the same and the food is kinda similar, maybe a bit less adventurous (Kronverksky 35 and Kamennostrovsky 9/2, both m. Gorkovskaya and 6 Liniya 25, m.Vasileostrovskaya). Krishna, that blue-skin Indian god also has his presence in the city opposite BKZ is as close to Indian cuisine you can get in the St Petersburg vegetarian cafe scene. Lots of milk-based ingredients and visible presence of religious extremism make this place one of my personal non-favorites. (Ligovsky, m. Pl. Vosstaniya). In general 'just off Nevsky' area is also "Lakshmi", just a few steps from Moloko club. Pretty nice and not so expensive, though nothing special on the other hand. (Hersonskaya 23, m. Pl. A. Nevskogo). My personal favorite is "Drugoy Mir" which is pretty far-off, but it has tasty food somewhere between Indian and European cuisine (which is the general trend in the veggie cuisine here), relaxing atmosphere, decent prices. It's a part of some "spiritual" center and I believe that a Krishna temple is upstairs, but it's not that disturbing. (Bumazhnaya 17, m. Narvskaya).

ЗАЧЕМ
ВОЛОДЬКА
СБРИЛ УСЫ?

Learning Russian: "Est' tut moloko ili yaytsa?" - Does it have milk or eggs? "Ty vegetarianets?" - Are you vegetarian?

POLITICAL THINGIES

(This section has been written by Zhenya "Slon", Knives N Forks 'zine co-editor)

OK, the politics. One of the few currently active political publications in St Petersburg is called "Novy Svet" (Alexandr Ermakov, PO Box 32, St Petersburg, 194291, Russia newworld @mail.admiral.ru) - it's a good anarchist paper, latest issue is #48. The group that is putting it out is called PLA (Piter's League of Anarchists, "Piter" is to St Petersburg what "Frisco" is to San Francisco), it consists of only a few people, they also publish plenty of leaflets and make an occasional action or two. It is a part of a bigger, covering the whole of ex-USSR, organization - ADA (Association of Anarchist Movements). Another @ organization, AD (Autonomous Action) which is centered around the "Avtonom" magazine doesn't have as many people in St Petersburg - there's this guy who does a site about AU (Leningrad's first punk band) and distributes "Avtonom" (Alexandr Bolshakov, do vostrebovaniya, St Petersburg, 192281, Russia / blackguard@mail.ru / http://svinpanov.da.ru). As you may know, Russia still continues the colonial war in Chechnya. There's a group that opposes it, called Anti-War Committee ("Novy Svet" address), it consists of anarchists, trotskyists, and some human rights types. They make weekly pickets at cross of Nevsky pr. and Malaya Konyushennaya ul. (m. Gostiny Dvor), each Sunday - as far as I remember, from midday to 2 pm. Another - not as left-wing - human rights organization that is, among other things, helping people not to go to the army is called "Soldiers' Mothers" (Raz'yezzhaya 9, St Petersburg, 191002, Russia , http://www.soldiersmothers.spb.org). A couple of local people take part in protest camps of "Rainbow Keepers", an anarcho-ecologist organization. (You can write to my PO Box c/o Tuuli or Zhenya or check out http://goryachiy.narod.ru). The animal rights movement isn't formed yet, you can write to SKAFANDR, "Voice" or "Knives N Forks" zine for cruelty-free individuals.

There is a feminist organization (St Petersburg Center of Gender Problems, PO Box 45, of. 37, Vosstaniya 40/19, St Petersburg, 191123, Russia / pcgi@mail.dux.ru) that also publishes a magazine "Posidelki". The local [liberal] antifascist newspaper "Tum-Balalaika" (E.T. Ezhova, PO Box 8, Pushkin-1, St Petersburg, 189620, Russia / http://tumbalalaika.memo.ru) has published its last issue (#17) and announced they will be doing a new magazine. They also used to organize demos / pickets twice a year.

Learning Russian:

"Anarkhiya - mat' poryadka" - Anarchy is the mother of order.

"Natsi na khuy!" - Fuck the nazis!

VARIOUS STUFF

Getting into the country is, thanks to the consequences of cold war, a pretty complicated matter. It is advisable to first check with the Russian embassy / consulate in your country - there were several stories of people taken off trains and vans and turned away at the border.

For cheap xerox service, check out the basement of school at Klinsky 7 (m. Pushkinskaya or m. Technologichesky Institut). Best and cheapest, and sometimes a meeting point. There is a metal radio show in the city that occasionally plays grind / metalcore / crust called "Banzai". It's midnight to 1 AM every Sunday at 106,3 FM (Radio Re-Cord). If you are going there with intention of hooking up with locals DIY locos, it is advisable to bring records / zines with you as that will help you feel important - the imported punk / hc stuff is tragically hard to get here. Plus, you can get local music as trade, not for money.

This mammoth task was undertaken by Sharapov (Dmitrij Ivanov, PO Box 30, St Petersburg-9, 195009,Russia / iq0@pisem.net / http://www.come-armageddon.com)

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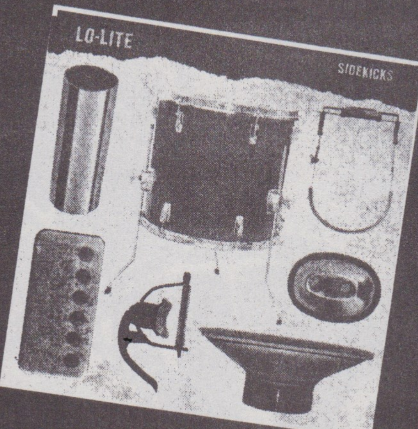

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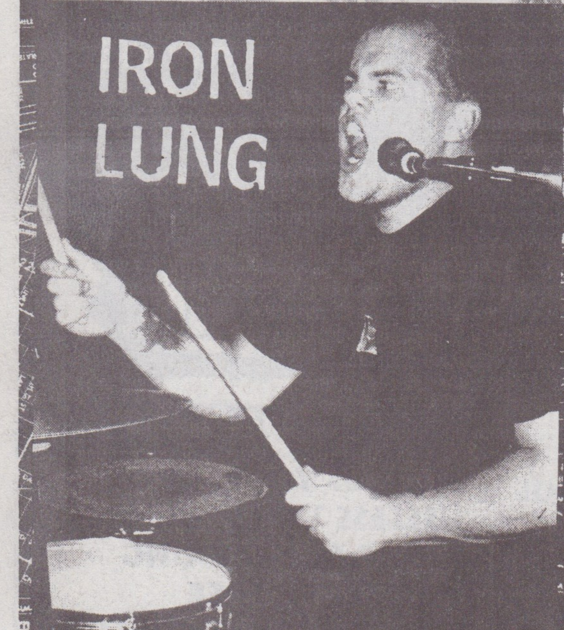

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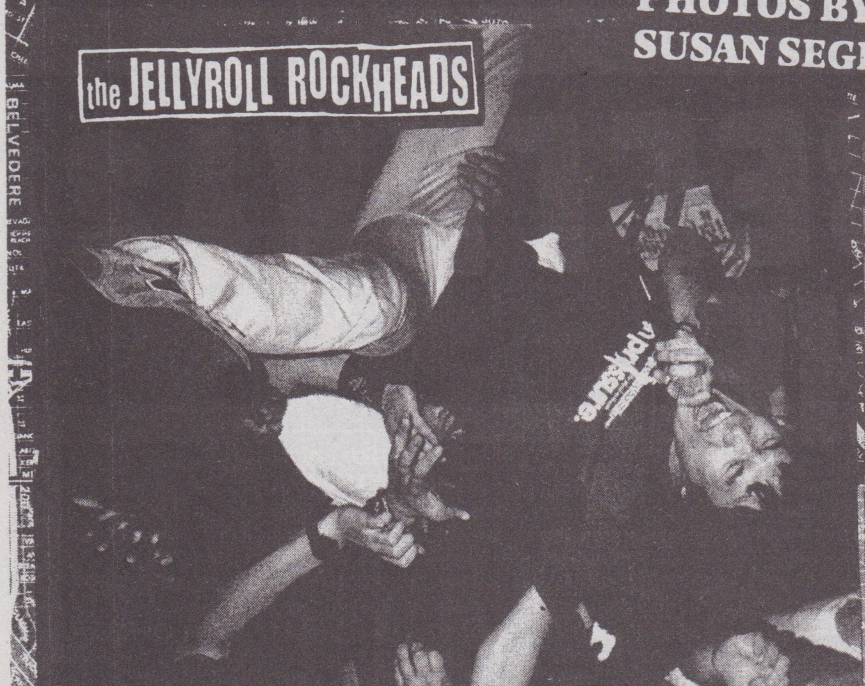

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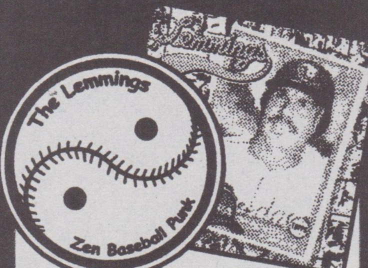

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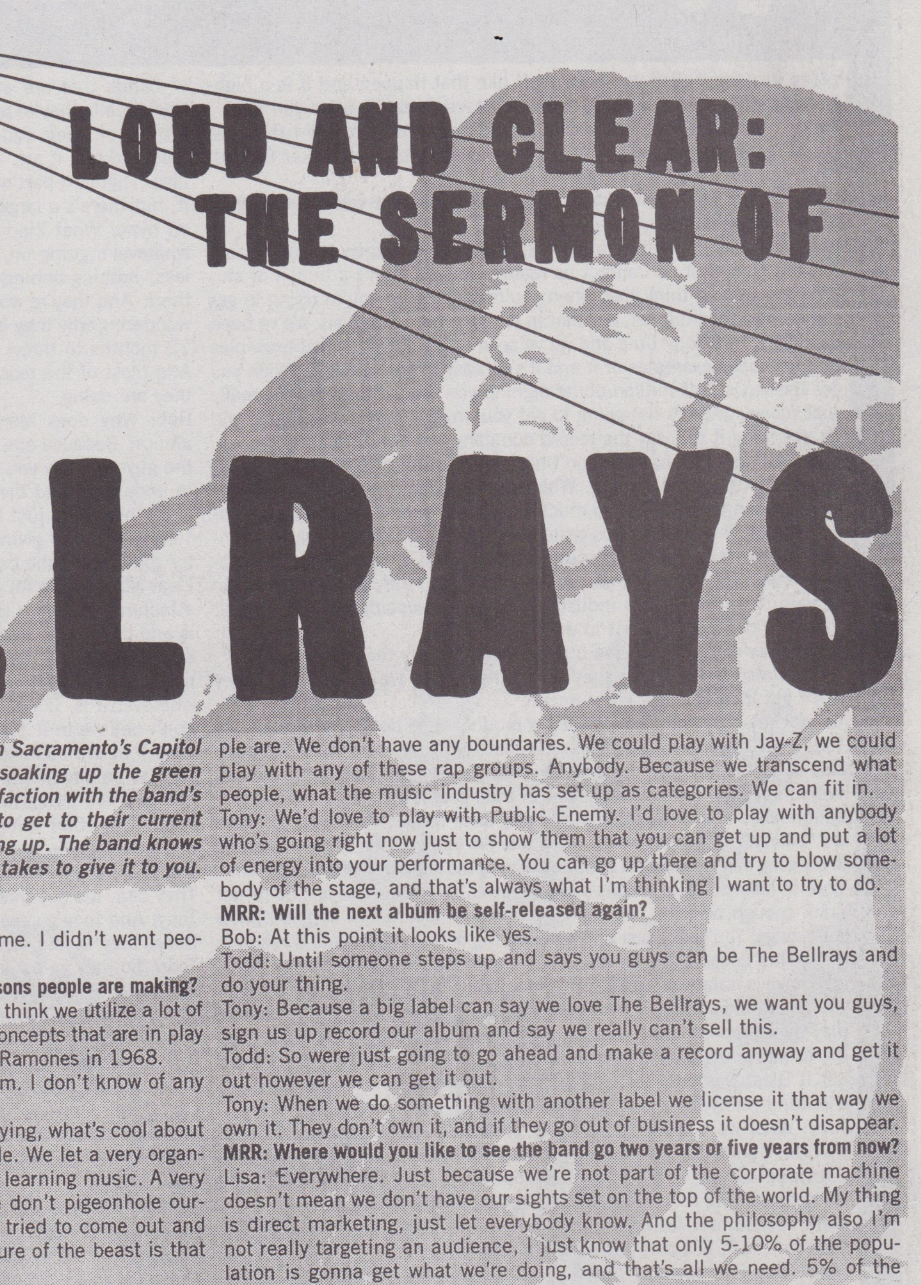
LOUD AND CLEAR: THE SERMON OF

THE BELLRAYS



Bob Vennum and Todd Westover escorted me through Sacramento's Capitol lawn to where Lisa Kekaula and Tony Fate were soaking up the green September grass. You could sense their glowing satisfaction with the band's surroundings. They have fought for over 10 years to get to their current position, and The Bellrays have no intentions of letting up. The band knows exactly what they want, and they will do whatever it takes to give it to you. Interview by Dan Shame.

MRR: How did you come up with the name?

Bob: I just thought it was a cool timeless sort of name. I didn't want people to instantly make a judgment.

MRR: How do you feel about the band and genre comparisons people are making?

Tony: People say you have a lot of 60s influence, but I think we utilize a lot of playing concepts that came along later like the 70s, concepts that are in play now. Different techniques, people didn't play like the Ramones in 1968.

Todd: And then there's the Jazz element we take from. I don't know of any other rock band that's doing that.

Lisa: And they still couldn't do it even if they were trying, what's cool about us is we are not trying to corner the market on a style. We let a very organic process take place when we're playing music and learning music. A very blue-collar ethic when we're working out songs. We don't pigeonhole ourselves that way. So that if even if some other band tried to come out and do the same type of thing that we're doing, the nature of the beast is that we couldn't ever sound similar.

MRR: If you could play with any other band in any time frame, who would it be?

Tony: John Coltrane 1965-66 would go perfect, that would be a great show.

Todd: If the Bellrays came out in '68 I think we would be one of those bands.

Lisa: But I think we would be a mind bender, I don't think people in '74 still would have known what to do with it. 2001 doesn't know what to do with us. Because we're reaching so much beyond that, and I don't have anything against that stuff. We could play with anybody, we could play with Rage Against the Machine, System of a Down, whoever the fuck these people are. We don't have any boundaries. We could play with Jay-Z, we could play with any of these rap groups. Anybody. Because we transcend what people, what the music industry has set up as categories. We can fit in.

Tony: We'd love to play with Public Enemy. I'd love to play with anybody who's going right now just to show them that you can get up and put a lot of energy into your performance. You can go up there and try to blow somebody of the stage, and that's always what I'm thinking I want to try to do.

MRR: Will the next album be self-released again?

Bob: At this point it looks like yes.

Todd: Until someone steps up and says you guys can be The Bellrays and do your thing.

Tony: Because a big label can say we love The Bellrays, we want you guys, sign us up record our album and say we really can't sell this.

Todd: So were just going to go ahead and make a record anyway and get it out however we can get it out.

Tony: When we do something with another label we license it that way we own it. They don't own it, and if they go out of business it doesn't disappear.

MRR: Where would you like to see the band go two years or five years from now?

Lisa: Everywhere. Just because we're not part of the corporate machine doesn't mean we don't have our sights set on the top of the world. My thing is direct marketing, just let everybody know. And the philosophy also I'm not really targeting an audience, I just know that only 5-10% of the population is gonna get what we're doing, and that's all we need. 5% of the world is a lot of people.

Tony: I think we can realistically achieve a fan base that exists on its own terms outside of commercial restrictions, like let's say the Ramones did. Or even a band like Fugazi or Husker Du had an enormous fan base that followed what they did, and I think we can achieve that on our own terms. Because like she was saying the whole corporate structure is changing now so we're not dependent on a big label to do that.

Lisa: Think of all the bands that got sucked up in that, it's hard enough just

THE BELLRAYS!

being in a band. But you have stuff like that happen and it is a highly destructive force. It helps to kill whatever creative juice you have.

Todd: I think the music world is becoming more global so I think we could reach an even bigger population that Fugazi or Husker Du did. We'll see how it all works out.

MRR: So you think labels don't know how to present your band to their record buying public?

Bob: That has something to do with the people who try to contact us, but the ones that do contact us realize that we aren't a bunch of stupid kids. People think that when you're coming up you're trying to get signed by a record label, but that in it self is not an end all. We've been doing this for a long time and we've seen examples of it, met examples of it and been examples of it and it's so easy to get screwed. When you get flashed a half million-dollar signing you realize that it's not really your money and it's not going to get you anything. You're going to end up spending it the way the record company wants you to spend it.

Lisa: Not only that but you don't have any control over what your product is, that's my main thing. When you talk about getting screwed by a record company it's not so much the money aspect as it is your product aspect. If what we do is write songs and we have a clear and concise idea of how it should sound. That should be the record company's reason for coming to you in the first place; they shouldn't want to change that. The record industry is so turned upside down on it self that they don't know what to do.

Tony: They're so behind the business community that it's insane.

Todd: I also believe that they don't know what we're all about, they don't get it, they don't know music.

Tony: They only know how to sell a product they don't know music.

Todd: The experience that I have is that they just know what someone else tells them. They don't really know what they like, I'm sure not everyone's like that but we're not in their realm of reality.

MRR: I heard Gilman wouldn't let you play there because they said you were too "bluesy." I personally think blues was the earliest form of punk because of the song themes and lack of acceptance by the majority of the population...

Bob: It falls down to people's perspectives of what punk is, you're not punk enough because you can sing and you have talent and you know your songs. You're not just up there beating on something and screaming

Lisa: This doesn't sound like Green Day kinda thing. Since you actually have a range of direction and motion that you can go through you're too old for us. Too mature for us. It could have been a power play by somebody there, I distinctly remember that the guy I was talking to was going back and forth through somebody else. This is before Let It Blast was out, before anybody really knew who we were, which shouldn't really make a difference at all.

Tony: What were talking about is a continuum of the blues, the kids that run Gilman St. and those kind of people, especially the Maximum Rocknroll culture they've forgotten that it's part of a continuum. They know there were records by The Stooges and Radio Birdman, but they don't realize how far back punk rock goes. They don't know it goes back to 1918, or Louie Armstrong or any of this.

Lisa: They don't realize that Ellington was punk. They don't understand that it's a state of mind. It's not a category that you can say this is punk and this isn't.

Bob: Just like every other aspect of society, they just think that all you need to do is be loud and yell. They don't realize that even the bands that they look up to, the trash punk bands and stuff, the early ones thought about what they were doing, they didn't just do it. I see a lot of bands that are afraid to break out of whatever genre they're in. Stylistically they're afraid to stretch anything because they're afraid of turning off their audience. So the continue to go out and yell and be loud and call it art.

Lisa: There's a part of the audience that's trying to do something about it, but there's a large part of the Rocknroll community that just relies on hype. What kind of ad campaign they can get out there to push whatever's going on, like Tony said earlier, its all this soulless, reckless, nothing-behind-it kind of music that's going on behind it out there. And they're wondering why people don't stand behind it, they're wondering why they have to keep coming up with something new every 12 months to throw at people or why certain things just don't stick. And most of the reason is because people don't believe in the things they are doing.

Bob: Why does Mariah Carey have to take more clothes off every album? Because she is singing shit, and people know it. They do, so the guys will say you have to do this album in shorts and the next one in underwear and the next one will be naked.

Lisa: Instead of just learning to sing a song.

Tony: Instead of giving her good material and a producer that wants to try something, she can sing...

Lisa: No, she can hit the notes, she cannot sing. She has no emotional attachment to what is in front of her. I think that stems from who she is and the people that are involved in music right now. My big thing to say to everybody that is listening to what we are doing or any individual that is behind what they are doing, musician, artist or painter, whatever it is. If you are not behind what you are doing 100%, if you don't believe in it 100% then get out. Get out and make room for the ones that are there to do something. If you think that you're going to do it to be a rock star or whatever, I'm fine with that as long as you're not up there trying to think that you're being an artist.

Todd: The other thing that has been happening is bands get signed and get huge record deals and are all over the radio, posters and all that are really mediocre bands, so people think, oh I can play like that. They can, it's not that hard.

Tony: And they go see them and they're boring, they're not doing anything, they're just standing there.

Todd: So they go back to their rehearsal spaces and do the same thing and think someday we can get a record contract like that.

Bob: Yeah we don't even have to try, we can just stand there and I know 5 chords, put your hat on backwards and you're set. You wear your shorts and your socks and your basketball shoes.

Todd: You just go up there and flip somebody off and wow you're a rock star.

Lisa: And then they happen to see us and they don't know what to do. They have no place to actually put that information. The thing that mama never told them about. That's what happens when they see a band like us.

MRR: Do you think you're approach is going to start a new trend that bands will start following?

Lisa: I think we've already started doing that, as soon as Let It Blast hit, as soon as people started buying it that started happening. We proved there, we didn't go by the industry standards as far as putting a record out, used a 6 track cassette to record our songs. No advertisement and people are buying that record like crazy. It doesn't fit with in the parameters of anything that the music industry is doing.

Tony: I see our influence on other bands especially on our local LA scene, bands that were good but kinda playing some standard stuff, now they're getting into more extended song forms. More complicated chord structures, different rhythms, something they would have done before. And 4-5 of the bands have recorded live albums, local bands. All our stuff cut live with all 4 of us in the room, there's no overdubs, and they all know that. All of them are cutting live albums, The Lazy Cowgirls, The Hangmen. Because they see that's where the power of bands are. If you can't do it live, you might as well be the Beatles doing Sgt. Pepper. And every time I open up a magazine I see some band say, yeah we play soul punk rock. They're throwing this term around that was originally applied to us. All over, on the east coast, in Europe, comparing them to us. I've never seen most of these bands, I have no idea what they sound like. The ones that I have seen use that term, they're rock and soul whatever, they use that because they're beating the same riffs down, all they're doing is playing James Jamerson's bass line again. The same kind of rhythms and that's all they're doing. Suddenly they're a soul band.

Lisa: It was a dirty word when we were doing it. We could not get arrested. We tried to get gigs for years, we were just doing what we do naturally. And people would focus on the fact that there's a black woman fronting the band and use this as a reason not to book us.

Tony: We couldn't be punk, we weren't punk enough and we weren't blues enough.

Lisa: I don't know where to put you so we're not going to put you on the show.

Lisa: Bob and I started from Riverside so we were starting with the Voodoo Glow Skulls, there was lots of festivals and shit that were going on around town and we were never asked to do any of them. The Skeletones have always been good to us, but there has always been a bunch of bands in our hometown that weren't putting it out for us. I think the way that we approach music is so foreign that that alone could have kept us in our own circle.

Bob: When we go live we raise the bar. When bands saw that, I could see that in so many bands reaction that they knew. It takes a lot to keep up with us. We are there to fuck your shit up. I don't care if you're the audience or the band or the doorman or standing outside. If you were in range, we were there to fuck your shit up. And that should be what you're there to do if you're a Rocknroll band. That's what the power is, you're there to overwhelm people and keep them overwhelmed. It's not a rest easy so the other bands… fuck that shit, if they can't hang, fuck 'em. If the crowd can't hang, fuck 'em. There were people last night who were just expecting us to put on a little show for them and stuff and Lisa went out in the crowd and told them to get the fuck out.

Tony: And they did!

Bob: I don't care if they're just there to fill up the club, if they aren't participating fuck 'em. If the bands weren't into it fuck 'em. We got left off of a lot of stuff because of that. Because of the simple fact that bands who were putting it together knew that we would blow them out. They weren't worried about putting on a great show and doing something for their audience they were worried about getting their asses kicked on stage, so we didn't get those calls.

Tony: There's some local bands in L.A. that draw good but they don't want to play with us, they don't want to follow us, and they don't want to play ahead of us.

Lisa: It's like Bob was saying, the thing about raising the bar, we don't just go out there to act like were there to do business, we are there to do business. People have gotten so used to, musicians especially, have gotten so used to acting out the role of being a Rocknroll star instead of getting out there and doing what you're supposed to do which is rock the house with every bit of your body and soul.

Bob: A lot of people get up on stage and think it's their god-given right to be up there and you should cater to us because it's their god given right, fuck no, no if the crowd doesn't like them they should get up on stage and rip them to pieces and get them the fuck out. Get somebody up there that's believing in what they're doing, who isn't just uppity and thinking they're better than somebody just because they can do that. That's what we're about when we're on stage, we're just trying to bring the truth to light.

Tony: When we came along it was at the tail end of the grunge thing, and it was like the end of the renaissance when the god painted weren't really around anymore. Just the crummy dudes were left at the very end of the 300 years. So at the tail end of grunge there was just crummy regurgitated bands, crummy hair metal bands, and the was nothing going on…

Bob: At the height of grunge!

Tony: Well, there was a lot of emotionless bands playing, and a lot of poseurs that acted like rock stars so they thought they were rock stars.

Bob: And a lot of these bands would get up and berate the audience and say why don't you get up and dance, we're going to play this song whether or not you listen. Whining, putting nothing into anything and expecting people to react to it. Keep doing what you're doing if that's what you believe in, but don't blame the audience. Look at the reason you're on stage, the audience doesn't like you for two reasons, either they just don't get it or they don't like you because they see through you.

MRR: Has your attitude and approach ever rubbed people the wrong way?

Bob: Well the party of people that got up and left last night. We could have just kept playing and not said anything…

Tony: But they won't forget The Bellrays!

Bob: Even if they never hear another note. It was right in the middle of the set. Lisa was singing, and I don't know if they were emulating it or making fun of it in the back of the room, and Lisa said if you want to interact you get up here. You don't stay safely in the back and drink beer. But they didn't want to so they left. Most bands will say things, but they won't instigate anything.

Lisa: You raise the bar for the rest of the audience too. You've already laid the card on the table. You say, alright, this is where we stand. We want the audience to be where we want to be or you get out too. I'm just as happy playing in front of the guys right here as I would be in a full house of people.

Todd: Yeah, we like to play, and if you don't like it you can go home.

Lisa: And the thing that I want to make clear is that we're not taking for granted the fact that there's an audience there, I don't mean it that way. I'm very respectful of the fact that we play in front of people, but I also understand that there's a reason that we were asked to play in front of people. As soon as you try to infringe on our ability to play by thinking that just because you want us to play quieter or one of those other things, that's just not gonna happen. We are there to play and do what we do.

Bob: We are there for what should be the same reason as the audience should be there. We're there because we like what we're doing, the audience should be there for that reason too. It shouldn't be I'll just sit here or whatever. That's what happened last night. They could have just sat there all night and nothing would have happened, but they chose to get involved for the wrong reason.

MRR: Do you think people are starting to understand the band more; is there less of a struggle with your audience?

Lisa: It's not a struggle, it the same thing as raising kids or having a relationship with your spouse or boss or whatever. When something happens you say something about it, you get used to saying something about it and it's not a problem. You lay it out there, I think a lot of band had the same problems that we've had, but once you start getting the attention a lot of them don't talk about that. They think now it's time to start playing and being excited about it. We're excited about playing, but we just want to say hey, we've been here a long time trying to do what we're doing. People weren't listening and we won't hold it against you but we're just letting you know we've been around the block, we know what's going on and this is what we do. So I don't see it as a struggle.

Tony: This stuff goes way beyond music, it's communication. Any problem in the world can be solved by stepping up to the plate and saying hey this is a problem, how do we fix it? And the other person saying, this is how we fix it. Instead of you're an asshole, you're fired! Which is generally what happens. If the person tries to cover it up and hide it and it's just all lies and bullshit. When you get past all of that you can have a hell of a great time. People who are going out trying to have a good time still have that on their mind, they're still not as happy as you think they'd be.

MRR: Do crowds in LA tend to be less excited about your performances than other places?

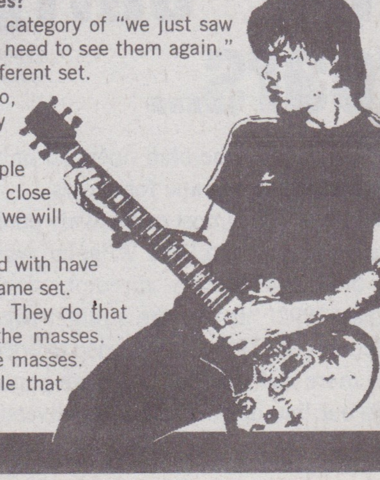
Lisa: We don't fall into that category of "we just saw them a month ago, we don't need to see them again." Each show is completely different set.

Bob: That is what we do, every time we play is totally different.

Lisa: We've noticed that people will show up to two shows in close proximity because they know we will play a totally different show.

Tony: Bands that we've toured with have done that, ever night is the same set.

Lisa: And you can feel that. They do that to signify it, to give it to the masses. And I ain't giving shit to the masses. We're giving it to the people that can take it



RHINO'S

By Jon Hancuff

Rhino's All-Ages Music Club was started in March of 1992 as a program of the Harmony Education Center, an alternative school in Bloomington, Indiana. It is a non-profit organization that has defied the stereotypes the media often associates with teens who seek to express themselves outside the parameters of traditional public schools.

The early years...

Initially the club operated only on Saturdays as a venue for shows.

"Early on it was almost exclusively punk or heavy stuff," said Brad Wilhelm, who has been the club's director since August, 1992. "It was the straight-edge hardcore scene. Then, as we tried to open up to more and more of the youth population our line-ups became more diversified."

The club now welcomes all types of musical acts – from ska to dj's to hip-hop to rap to folk – with punk and rock still in the mix. There are shows every Friday and Saturday night and even some weeknight shows.

Despite having what many would say is a volatile mix of different crowds, Wilhelm describes Rhino's as a pretty peaceful place.

"The core group of kids who work here police the shows themselves," Wilhelm said. "They don't want to lose what they have here. The majority of the people who have criticized us or tried to get us shut down have never been here."

Rhino's lives up to its billing as a student run program. They have been able to dictate almost fully the direction the club has taken – turning it into more of an activity center instead of just a club for music. Rhino's is now open everyday from 3 to 6 p.m. It tries to fill a void left when the city decided to close the Space Port Arcade to build an upscale shopping center/ apartment complex. One wall of Rhino's is lined with (awesome) old video games but they are far from the only activity available. The club produces a monthly show for the local cable access channel and a weekly radio show for WFHB, the community radio station. There is also the mural arts program where an artist comes in and works with interested teens to create murals that are displayed at local parks and at the John Waldron Arts Center in downtown Bloomington. There is also a counseling service.

It all started with the music

Rhino's was (and is) about the only place in Bloomington, home of Indiana University, for people under the drinking age to see national acts. Tribe 8, Fishbone, Bad Brains, and Gone are just some of the bands who have stormed the stage at Rhino's. It is also the first place that many local bands get a chance to play on a real stage with a real soundman. According to Wilhelm booking an all-ages club hasn't been too hard.

"A lot of bands want to play all-ages," said Wilhelm. "The thing is, a lot of bands that think they are an all-ages draw –aren't. Either the younger crowd hasn't heard them or they don't care about them."

Wilhelm used to do all the booking; a job that is now handled for the most part by a group of volunteers that meets on Friday afternoons. Any interested in joining in is welcome.

"I'm 38 years old now, I have no idea what a 15 year old wants to listen to," said Wilhelm. "The kids come in and tell me what they want to hear and I think that keeps the place more viable."

Wilhelm said that they do go after some acts, but mostly they work with the people that come to them.

"I will let about anybody, depending on what they are trying to do, come in here and promote their own show," said Wilhelm.

Life in Bloomington

Though an oasis as far as cultural life in Indiana is concerned, Bloomington is still home to some good old-fashioned Hoosier conservatism with a touch of big business ass-kissing thrown in.

Recently the city has passed a noise ordinance that allows a police officer to ticket someone whose music can be heard in the street, regardless of the time of day. Hard hit by this have been local musicians trying to practice and the basement show scene.

Wilhelm says he has seen no increase in crowd size or the number of local bands looking to get booked since the ordinance was passed. He believes that the reason for this is that the basement shows scene, one that is already figuratively and literally underground, will continue no matter what.

"You're never going to be able to stop the basement shows," Wilhelm said.

More vexing for Rhino's was the crackdown on posting fliers on utility poles around town. It's a law that has been on the books for awhile, but the city began to enforce it more strictly after spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to "beautify" downtown – which in most cases meant tearing out old trees and replacing them with brick sidewalks and decorative light poles. Clubs and bands can be fined $50 for every flier that is found on a utility pole.

"It's especially hurt the smaller bands," said Wilhelm. "I encourage the kids to promote their own shows as much as possible. I went to the mayor and he said he would look into getting kiosks set up around town. They put a couple in People's Park (a popular hangout place on the main strip half a block from the university). Other than that I haven't seen any more."

Speaking of mayors – Rhino's became an issue in the city's mayoral race in the mid-nineties. Word got around that Tribe 8 had taken their shirts (again) off during a performance at the club and the conservatives had a field day (again).

"The press made it a much bigger deal than it needed to be," Wilhelm said. "Again, most of the people complaining about us have never even set foot in the place."

There are two big reasons that the club has survived and grown like it has.

The first is that the kids and the bands are more than willing to follow a few simple guidelines – no drugs, no alcohol, no tobacco, no firearms and no fighting. In addition, bands are not allowed to simulate sex on stage and no nudity is allowed. Rhino's is not trying to enforce a way of living on anyone – as evidenced by all the smokers who rush for the door between bands.

The second reason the club still exists is that it has gone out of its way to work with many civic and charity groups in the city, thus earning their endorsement.

Among the many groups are: Monroe County United Way, Indiana Criminal Justice Institute, City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation, HUD Community Development Block Grants, and the Indiana Department of Commerce (there are a bunch more).

"They monitor what we do," said Wilhelm. "So if you come out and say 'Rhino's is a bad place.' Then you're questioning the judgement of those groups."

Despite the odds Rhino's has been able to survive for almost ten years and in the process they have made sort of a blueprint for other all-ages venues to follow.

(Rhino's can be reached a number of different ways – 325 South Walnut Street, Bloomington, IN 47401 – (812)333-3430 – www.bloomington.in.us/~rhinos/index.html – or email rhinos@bloomington.in.us)

RHINO'S
All Ages
Music Club
FRI TOTAL CHAOS
FISHBONE
CLASSIC SMACK
SAT MID CARSON JULY STUDENT
SUN IMAGINE
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325 South Walnut
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RHINOS

WASTED

INTERVIEW BY STEVE SCANNER
PHOTOS BY KRISTOFER PASANEN

MRR: Ok, first off, just tell us where you are and what kind of mood you are in as you sit down to do this interview?

Ville: Right now we are hanging at Antti's, our guitar player's apartment, just listening to good tunes. He's making a tattoo and I'm sitting at the computer answering this interview. We are feeling fine at the moment. It's nice to do this kind of interview for a change, because there have been a lot of interviews we've done after gigs, parties, or something like that, and we've been either really tired or really drunk, and then said a lot of stupid things. So people might get the impression that we're always drunk and partying, which is of course not true.

MRR: Give us a bit of the band's early history—how did you all meet, who were the original influences and do they still hold true, how was the first practice, did you have any original goals or ambitions when you started the band, were you in any previous bands we may have heard of?

Ville: Wasted was formed in late 1996 in a small town in eastern Finland called Joensuu. We had all known each other for like three or four years before that; some of us had played together in the same bands. We played ska punk, early 80´s Finnish hardcore, and punk rock. None of the bands released anything though, so not many people know them. Someone might know some of our members' current bands, Viimeinen Kolonna and Pax Americana. Wasted started because we wanted to form a band which would play the kind of music that we listened to when we first got into punk; the sounds that gave us the kicks back in the day, and the feeling of belonging to something more real than a football team. Originally, the idea was to play music we'd like listen to ourselves, and since no one else was doing it in Finland at the time, we decided that there's got to be at least one raw, old-school, punk rock band in Finland. We're all skateboarders, and one of the first skate videos we saw was the Santa Cruz video *Streets on Fire*. As kids, we listened to the soundtrack. That video was also a big inspiration to start a band. Some of our other influences at the beginning were Black Flag, Circle Jerks, Adolescents, Agent Orange, Channel Three, and Operation Ivy; some of which still hold true, but not nearly as much as in the beginning. Nowadays, we try not to take too much from influences when creating our own sound. At first, we didn't really have any goals for the band. We were just playing for fun, not even playing gigs. We just jammed and partied at the same time, so the band wasn't really going anywhere. But then, in Joensuu there's a rock festival every summer. We'd always go there, every year, and we always had some kind of line-up that could play a gig there, that way we could get free tickets for the fest. We had to start practicing really hard for a proper set, and make up a name for the band to get in for free. So we did, and we called ourselves Wasted. For us, it doesn't mean like being completely pissed, stoned, or whatever, fucked-up. It's a kind of self-ironic expression for the people living the "punk lifestyle," alternative lifestyle, or anything that's "unacceptable" in the society; as inyou're unnecessary, useless for the development of our great western, civilized, capitalistic society. Like, our old friends at school or whoever would say, *"You're all wasting your life! You can't go on living like that. You've got to get a real job, decent education, or something! You're going nowhere!"*

MRR: You left Joensuu, Finland, quite early in the band's career for the country's capital, Helsinki, yeah? Why choose to undertake that move and has it been a successful venture for the band's career?

Ville: Yeah, we moved to Helsinki pretty early in the band's career. We left Joensuu maybe a little bit over a year after we started. The reason we left was that we were really enthusiastic about the band and wanted to play gigs, record and release stuff, but there was nothing really happening in Joensuu. There was a gig maybe once every two to three months.

MRR: After this move, how long was it before you released your debut single? Was it well received, did you find the recording process to be an enjoyable experience?

Ville: It took maybe a couple of months to release our first seven-inch, and we started to get offered a lot of gigs after that. The first studio session was quite an experience. It was one of the first times for all of us to be in a studio, so of course we were pretty nervous and got really drunk. When we got all the bass and drums recorded, and it was time to start recording the guitars, Kalle, our bass player, decided that there was something wrong with the guitar, and started to fix it! He took all the strings and pickups off, unscrewed all the parts, and of course didn't have a clue how to fix it, or let alone put it back together! Anyway, we managed to make an eight song seven-inch and released it partially by ourselves and partially by our friend's small label. The reception was very positive and encouraging, especially because we had no expectations, we were just happy to have put some songs on vinyl. After that, we started to play a lot of gigs around Finland. And in a short period of time, about a year, we released two more seven-inches and went on our first European tour, in 1999.

MRR: You hooked up with the Finnish label, Combat Rock Industry, to record your debut album, *Suppress and Restrain.* How did you hook up with them? Have you been pleased with all the work they have done for you? Do you ever see yourselves on a label other than Combat Rock?

Ville: Actually, the same guys who do Combat Rock Industry released two of our seven-inches before the first album, just under the different names of labels, Halla and Grey Days. They had two different labels, but were putting out a lot of stuff together, so they decided to combine their efforts to get things done more effectively. The album *Suppress and Restrain* was their first release as Combat Rock Industry. We go back a long time with them, they are really good friends of ours. Jani plays in Manifesto Jukebox and Janne plays in Endstand, so we also do gigs and tours together with them. They have done a great deal of things for us. It's kind of hard to see ourselves on a different label in Finland, but of course if some labels want to release our stuff in other countries, we'd be happy to do it.

MRR: That brings us up to the recent *Down and Out* album, also on Combat Rock. It's got an incredibly lively, powerful sound. You must be really happy with it, yeah? Is there anything, given the advantages of hindsight, that you'd change about the album? Is it fair to say that this is the best representation of what Wasted are all about?

Ville: Yeah, I'd say for all of us, we are really happy with the album. We were actually pretty surprised that it came out so good. Of course, there are some mistakes on it, but it's punk rock, isn't it? It's not supposed to be perfect, or clinical, because you'd lose a part of the sincerity and the energy. The sound has got to reflect the songs we sing about. We don't sing about happiness or girls and how life is perfect, because it's not. The recording session was really intense, and some songs are the first takes. We wanted to get the "live" feeling on the record, so in some parts you can hear a lot of shitty playing or singing, but we didn't want to ruin the feeling by trying new takes. The studio we recorded it in was really good, an old analog studio. We didn't mess with computers, and we used old amplifiers. No gimmicks. There was a really relaxed atmosphere, even though we didn't have too much spare time there. I wouldn't change much on the record, maybe just some bass or guitar levels on some parts, but you'll get used to them as you listen to it more. I'd say it's by far the best album we've done, but there's always a lot to improve and further developing our music; taking new approach

MRR: Did the recording of it differ in any way to previous recordings? It was recorded in five days. It must have been a pretty flat out session! I noticed you produced it yourselves along with Jani of MANIFESTO JUKEBOX. Did you learn anything about the process of recording through this album?

Ville: Not really, the recording didn't differ from the earlier sessions. Maybe the only differences werethe quality of the studio was far better than before, we had actually practiced the songs well before we went there, and we knew what kind of sound we were looking for. Actually, the album was recorded in four days and one day to mix it. We wouldn't mind having a day or two more for the recording, but since studio time is so fucking expensive. We have recorded stuff in different studios about ten times before, and we've always produced it ourselves, so we have learned a lot along the way.

MRR: If we can just talk about a couple of the songs on the album, starting with "Payback Time." The opening line mentions a new disease, what does this refer to? Likewise, as it progresses there's the closing line of, "If you fuck with the law of nature, it's going to fuck with you." Is this a genetic cloning reference? Does this track have any parallels to the "Daily Supply (Of Vanity)" track that also mentions cloning?

Ville: The song "Payback Time" is about the never-ending progress of mankind, the industrialization, mass-consumption, and everything that's raping the earth. Now it's coming to a point where the load of man's mistakes and abuse is getting too heavy for it to bare. For example, the disease that cows are getting now, BSE. That's an example of fucking with nature's order. Cows are vegetarians. Those stupid fucks feed them ground up bones and all the other leftover parts of dead cows to them! So that fucks them up and develops this disease. I think that genetic cloning is a huge mistake as well. I'm pretty sure that we'll see some new diseases, and who knows what is in the future or what might have already happened, because we'd be the last ones to know.

MRR: *Reality Check* has an opening verse that gives reference to, what could seem, certain race issues, with lines like, "wiping the sweat out of white man's collar", "a tainted black skin," and "the village is emptied by white man's law." What does that all refer to, and how does it fit into the scheme of the rest of the song?

Ville: Yeah, it kind of touches on that racial subject, but it's not a specific story about racism. It's kind of a fictional story about how things could be different. The main idea behind it is, what if we had been born somewhere else, other than in this relatively safe country, for example in the middle of a war zone in some third world country, with no shelter or food. There are so many people who take all the things in life for granted and have gotten everything in their life "for free" or "served on a plate," you know these racist, self-righteous, selfish, arrogant, know-it-all, wife and kid beaters. So maybe if these people thought about that for a second, you know, if they wouldn't have been born white, upper class fuckers, maybe it would bring them back to earth. I don't know, but they need their head shaken, they need a reality check. "Open your eyes, motherfuckers!"

MRR: Lyrically, the whole album has quite a political and socio-political feel. Is that a direction you are proud to take the band in, and do you as people prefer bands with a message? Do you not consider that being called Wasted, maybe the message is lost as the name does conjure up a bunch of glue bags?

Ville: Personally, I hate party politics and all that bullshit, but I'm interested in what's going on in this world. We don't sing about how things should be or what people should do, the lyrics are just my personal view on things in the world, how I see it all through my eyes. I want to use the freedom to voice my opinion on matters that I disagree with or what pisses me off. We are proud that our band is not just another street-punk band that sings about fighting and drinking. Not that there's something wrong with drinking, uh, but I respect bands with a message, and with an honest, sincere attitude. But not all of our lyrics are political. Writing lyrics is a very effective form of therapy for me as well. So some songs have a really personal feel to them. It's an outlet for anger, frustration, depression, and all the difficulties in life in general. What I said earlier about the bands' name, I hope that people are intelligent enough to see what we are about, that being punk for us is not about being wasted all the time, but actually doing something for what you believe in, and living your life accordingly towards those goals.

MRR: The album is also released in some way on Germany's Scene Police Records. What's the deal there?

Ville: The CD version of the album was released by Combat Rock Industry in Finland, the vinyl was released by Scene Police and Rockstar records in Germany, and it was also released on tape by Trujaca Fala in Poland. We were planning to do it as a split release and were looking for a label to collaborate with us. Jani from Combat Rock Industry just asked the people on Scene Police if they would be interested in doing it. They were happy to do it, so that's about how it went, and here we are.

MRR: Have you had any interest in licensing the album to any labels in the States? The band has a sound that the likes of TKO, Beer City, and GMM favorhave they shown any interest?

Ville: Yeah, we are interested in licensing it to some label in the States, if someone would be interested in doing it. We've sent some CDs and promos over there. I hope that something's going to come up. It would be nice to tour in the States as well, because we've only been touring around Europe. We have only licensed the new album in Poland. But *Suppress and Restrain* is released also in Brazil on the same CD with Manifesto Jukebox's *Desire*.

MRR: Talking of Beer City, you released a single or had a track on a comp with themhow did that come about? Did that bring you a great deal of new attention?

Ville: Yeah, it was a couple of years ago. We were just sending some demos all over to different labels, Beer City wrote back to us, and wanted a song for an international comp called *Underground Invasion*. I don't think it brought us that much attention, it's hard to say, maybe a couple more people know about us in the States. We also have a song for an upcoming Finnish punk compilation that Beer City is supposed to put out, but I don't know when that's going to happen.

MRR: So, the Wasted live experience! What can punkers expect if they come to a Wasted show? My guess is you are a fairly energetic band live. Do you have any stories of on the road debauchery/hilarity to tell? Do you do any covers live?

Ville: Nothing really special has happened to us on tour, just the usual, a little fighting, the car breaking down, running out of gas. One time we had this little incident. We played in Praque, Poland and we left right after the gig for the next gig in Bern, Switzerland. It's a pretty long drive. So it took us almost 24 ours to drive there just to find out that the gig had been cancelled! Nice. Fugazi were playing in Praque the same day as well, so it was nice to sit in the car instead... Yeah, another story about the same van, when the van started to be in really fucked up condition, it used almost as much oil as it used gasoline, so it took while. It broke down. The engine signed off while we were driving. So we tried to push it to the side on the highway and missed the side road, the van slipped down into the ditch, and we almost tipped it over. We left it there. So, a couple of weeks later, as we were watching this Finnish cable TV channel, there was a program about this really fucked heavy metal, nazi band touring Finland. And what the fuck, there it was, they were smashing all the windows of our van, trying to break every fucking part of it! So it got fucked, but the funny part is that some weird car-collector called us later and bought the fucked-up van for about 800 euros! Wasted's live experienceevery time we play we try to rock as hard as we can! No matter if there's no one watching, or there are a thousand people, we try our best. But the crowd's response is really important. We have played some songs from Black Flag, Stiff Little Fingers, Operation Ivy, and even "Motorbreath" from Metallica! We recorded Black Flag's "Depression" many years ago, but it sucked so bad that it never got released. I don't know, we might record a cover song someday, who knows.

MRR: You've undertaken a few European tours as well. How did you find the reaction in various countries? What about the way you were treated? Did you find it was much the same as in Finland, better or worse?

Ville: We have toured Europe four times now, and the next spring/summer we are hopefully going to go to Poland and England at least. We'll see how much we can tour, because some of us are studying and working as well, so it makes touring a little harder. The tours have been great and they are getting better all the time, because people start knowing us more. I think the nicest and craziest places gig wise have been Check and Poland. Maybe it's because the bands don't tour so much there compared to say, Germany. But we are being treated so well everywhere we go, that's really great. People are so polite, friendly, and hospitable. That's something we Finns have to learn from. Maybe it's because of this shy and anti-social nature of the Finns, I don't know, but I think that you get treated a lot better in Central Europe than in Scandinavia.

MRR: Did you notice any striking differences, either social or political, between the punk scenes, or otherwise, in the various countries you have played?

Ville: Not too much, it's more or less the same wherever you go. Still, the smaller the country, the less there's division between the scenes. For example, Finland is a very small country and so is the punk/hardcore scene. Of course, there's some division in Finland still, but I'd say it's pretty united compared to

some bigger countries. I'd say that goes for every smaller town as well everywhere, the scene is better when almost everyone knows each other, I think. For example, in Germany, there's a lot of bands touring all the time, so it's not even possible to go and see every foreign band and be excited about it, which in Finland could be possible, because not a lot of bands tour here. And then the there's some differences between the "rich" and the "poor" countries. In the "rich" countries you see some people in the scene doing it just for fashion and for the "cool" music, in the poorer countries it's more like a lifestyle, the people are more sincere. For them the only choice is to do something yourself. In some countries radical punk/hardcore bands are really well known, because the "common" people can really relate to the music through the lyrics about poverty, government oppression, homelessness. It's more like "folk" music to them.

MRR: Expand a little on what Punk in Finland is like. I can remember a lot of Dis-core type bands, but you, Endstand, and Manifesto Jukebox, in particular, do seem to be a bit of a hot bed of varied punk action right now. Is it a good place to live?

Ville: As I said before, the scene is not so big, but it's good and getting better all the time. There are a lot of new good bands, and a new generation of young punks coming up. We used to have a lot of Discore type of bands, but nowadays it's more diverse, there are a lot of different styles, which is really good. There are also some more melodic bands coming up. There used to be some melodic bands, but it was mostly just Ramones and skate-type punk. A drawback is that the scene is concentrated in the two or three bigger cities, and all the gigs are in the same cities. But at least we are trying to play all over, we are going to go up to tour Lapland and some smaller cities in a couple of weeks. There's also a shortage of good places to organize gigs. It's all rock clubs, bars, or bigger clubs, so almost everything is for people over 18. There used to be one squat in Finland, but squatting is really hard, because of the harsh winter and the cops. It was 30 degrees Celsius below, two weeks ago. The social security also makes people lazy, because you get a place to live and money easily when you're unemployed. But, I'd say Finland is a really good place if you think of the environment, pollution, and all of that. It's not overpopulated, there's still a lot wilderness, there are lakes that you can swim in without getting a disease, and it's still full of uncut forests. They haven't ruined it all, yet.

MRR: Finland still has National Call-up, conscription, whatever you wish to call it. Is that something you've all been through? Do you have any tales to tell relating to that? There are a few tracks on the album that have links to that, "Recruits" and "Not From Your World," seem to be the most obvious, is that correct?

Ville: Unfortunately we do and we have all been through it. None of us went into the army. If you refuse the army, you've got two choices-you can do civil service, you work in hospitals, youth centers, universities, and libraries for thirteen months, or you can go to jail for six and a half months. Thirteen months is a long time, and people are trying to get it shorter, but nothing's happened yet. We all did civil service, which is still fucked up, because it's kind of a punishment for believing in something. The Jehovah Witnesses don't have to go to jail or do anything, because they say it's against their religion to go into the army. What makes it different for us is we just don't have that fucking religion to stand behind. Yeah, we have quite a few songs about it. There's just so many people, even some people in the punk scene, who go into the army. The pressure from society and family is so hard that few people even question it. You know, it's harder to get "good" jobs or get in "good" schools. I personally never want to have anything to do with that kind of people who have such a twisted attitude.

MRR: What are your views on the European Union? Is it going to remove any individuality the countries currently possess?

Ville: I don't like the idea of the "Fortress Europe" or "the United States of Europe." The gap between the rich and the poor is going to get bigger and bigger. For example, Poland is trying to get into the European Union. So they have to get their country on "the same level" as the rest of the European Union countries. So, now all the prices are getting higher and higher, and the wages stay the same. The people can't afford to buy anything, but who cares if that's the way to get into the Union. Fuck! For the countries that are not in the European Union, their currency also gets worse, so I don't know how it can be good. It's going to bring more inequality. The power to decide things that are important to us goes further away from us, and the power is in the hands of fewer and fewer people.

MRR: Finland is one of the twelve countries to start using the euro. How are you finding it and are you in favor of the euro as currency? Could this lead to the poorer countries getting further into debt, creating a definite economic difference between the powerful and the less so?

Ville: That's true. The only good thing about this whole thing is that it's easier for bands to tour. There's not so much border control, and you don't have to change money all the time. But since all the other things about it have a negative impact, we are not in favor of the euro.

MRR: Your lyrics are all sung in English. Is there any reason you chose not to sing in your native language? Do you write them in English first, or do you translate and adapt them from Finnish?

Ville: Since punk is a very international thing and we want our band to be something more than just music, it's pretty obvious that we use the most international language, English. Besides, I don't like the sound of Finnish in this kind of music. It fits some bands though. We all started studying English when we were ten years old or something. I have been traveling a lot around the world. So I don't have to translate from Finnish first, it comes pretty natural. Only five million people live here, so we have to know different languages to be able to communicate with people from other nations. A lot of people speak English, Swedish, and German.

MRR: So, where is next for Wasted, any chance of you getting to America or the UK for some shows? Have you even considered the follow up album to *Down and Out* yet?

Ville: There's been some talk about putting out a new seven-inch or something, we've got a couple of new songs, but we'll see what happens. In March or so, we have a seven-inch compilation CD coming out. There's going to be all of the songs we've released before the two albums on it, some live shit, and all of our videos. It's going to be quite a package. There will be a UK tour in June if everything goes as we've planned, and a tour in Poland in the spring. We'd love to go to the US as well someday, but we are poor suckers, and the plane tickets are expensive as hell. If anyone is interested in releasing an album there, booking shows, or anything else that comes to mind, feel free to contact us

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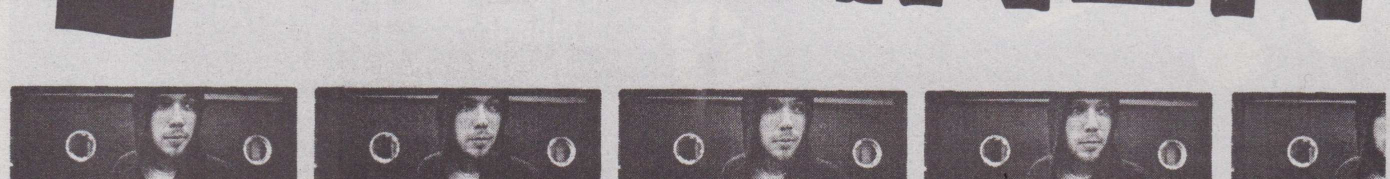
Photo by Ea Vaske

(an interview) with the photographer behind the book

IDENTITY PARADE:

KRISTOFER PASANEN


LONS DALE
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MRR: Were you into photography before punk or the other way around?

I'd say I found them at pretty much the same time. I was going to a media orientated school, in another city than I lived in and there got to meet people in the local scene I finally got involved with, and eventually took some photo courses. But I didn't buy my first camera until after a few punk shows and punk was still the reason why I started taking photos at all, so they kind of gave meaning to each other.

MRR: Why be a photographer? I mean why not start a band or do a fanzine like everyone else?

I can't really say why, there were just so many small things contributing to it. As a small kid my dad took a lot of photos of me and I think that meant something. But the day I bought my first camera was a coincidence, but it was all so clear to me at the time... I had this feeling that this was the thing I wanted to do. And the more I did it the more right it felt, so many people started bands for so many reasons and today I'm happy I do this... At the same time I also got into graphic design (check my web page out to see more: www.uiah.fi/ kpasanen), and did lots of demo cassette covers, two fanzines, and some record covers (which I'm trying to do as much as possible right now). By doing this I got to show my photos to more people, and also had the creative control to know what comes out of it.

Today I really have the desire to start a band, or at least something other than just take photos, but it's not my thing...

MRR: 138 from DS 13 told me that if you made a book of photos of only bands you liked it would be a really thin book. Obviously you go to a ton of shows to shoot where you might not be so into the music. Does that lead to a series of contradictions? Do you find bands whose music you like but aren't interesting to shoot or vice versa?

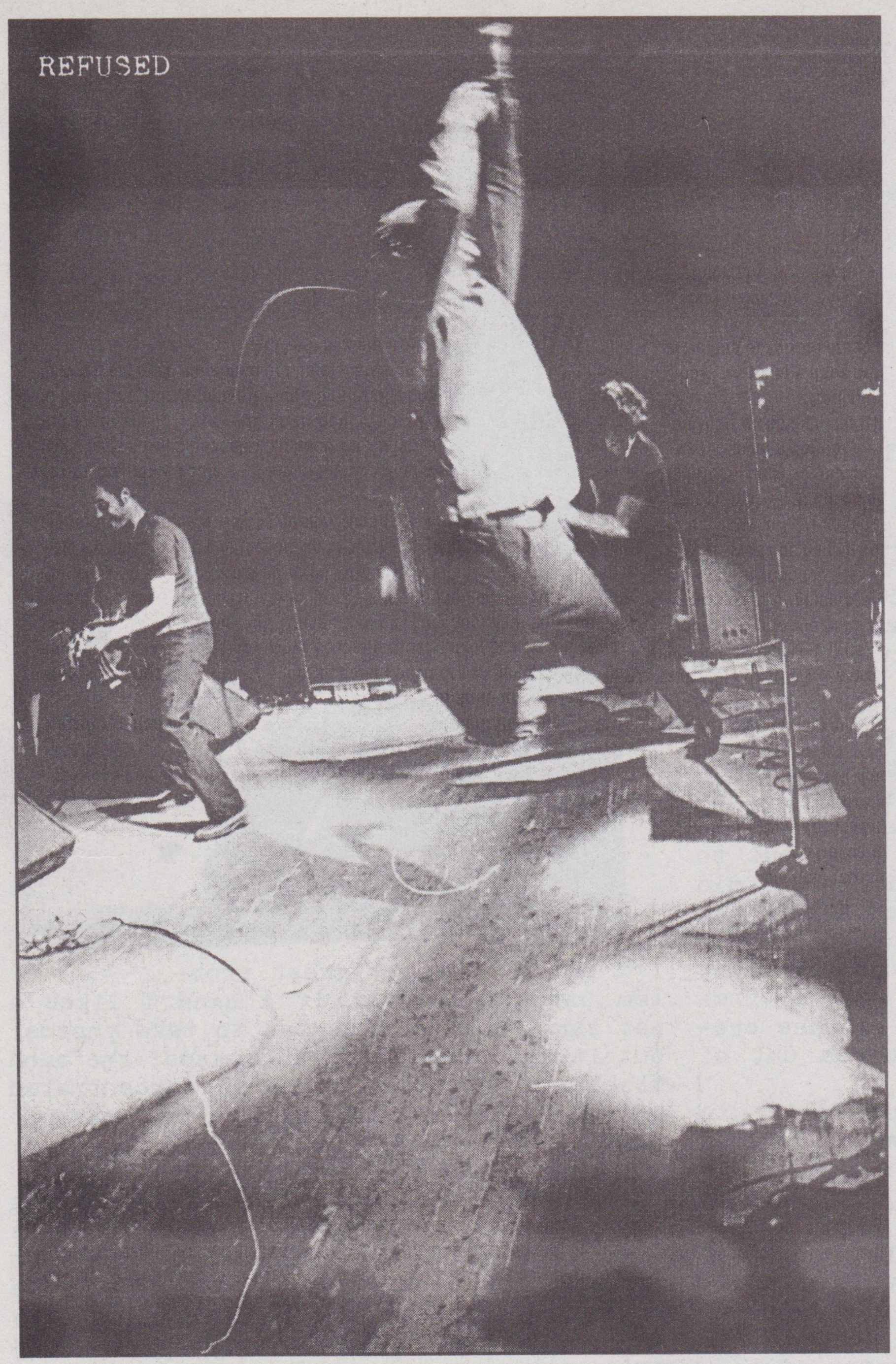
My first five years taking photos at shows I shot *everything*, no matter of how bad, good, boring, fun, young, old, uninteresting the music or people were. And I shot a lot, often one roll of film per band, especially if it was a foreign band. It wasn't so much about who it was, but to get the experience. Maybe it was that when I started out everything was fresh and in some way good, today far from everything is even interesting, but I still go to as many shows as I can and might take some photos, but can decide not to, which I couldn't back then.

OUTLAST

I'd say that the biggest problem used to be that if a band I liked a lot came to play I wanted to take photos, but it also meant that I "missed" the band itself. I've always been so concentrated on how it looks, composition, and haven't heard so much of how it actually sounds. So today I take the photos in a shorter time, and so get to see and hear something too. What I've basically always liked is "emo," which is also the most difficult to capture live, but I try to make more esthetically nice pics then. Then it comes to the huge old school trend that hit Sweden some time ago, even though I really dislike that today (most of it at least) it's always been fun to shoot since lots of the bands really give it all on stage.

MRR: You wrote some pretty detailed captions to many of the pictures in the book. I thought this was a different approach from most photo zines and books where the picture sort of speaks for itself. It made a bigger impact on me though to read your descriptions of the shows, the times, and the inspiration behind the photos. Could you separate that level of personal involvement and just shoot any subject?

Taking photos of people I know has always been easier, they know who I am and can relax, and I know what they are like



not only on the stage. So this is, of course, the best possible situation. It totally depends on what subject you refer to: I have political opinions, I'm vegan, anti-fascist, and so on. So anything being against that is out of the question. For example, in school when we get an assignment, I try to make it so that I could use it for my own stuff, not just to put it in some box and then twenty years later throw it away. When it comes down to it, it's really important for me to have that personal involvement, and I try to keep it that way...

MRR: What sort of equipment do you use?

I used to have this old Canon F1 made in the 80's or so, and a flash. But to get my book ready I had to buy my own computer and sold my camera to get some money... Now I only have a compact camera which works really good, an Olympus Mju II. Instead of going to the darkroom as before I scan most of my photos, but if it is for some specific purpose I still make prints.

MRR: Do you have any formal training like art school, or taking pictures commercially like for a newspaper or at weddings?

As I said in the beginning, I started at a media orientated school, but I'm pretty much self taught. I bought my own darkroom equipment and did it the best I could. Then one year at another school studying photography, and now I'm taking my BA in photography at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki and will probably after that take the MA degree. I'm right now working doing layout at one newspaper in Helsinki, and through that I got a whole page with photos and text about a place for orphan dogs in Estonia. I did some weddings, to get some money to buy food, but no more of that for now.

MRR: Which photographers have inspired you, and in what ways?

There are so many, here in Finland there are so many great photographers. There are a whole bunch of old men doing the documentary thing and that gets me going. A lot of people might think that I've been growing up with Glen E. Friedman's book next to my bed, but I "found" his stuff really late. By then it more felt wow, someone else does this full-time, and that inspired me to keep going. The same with people as Shawn Scallen, Cynthia Conolly, and more. Too bad all of these names are from North America...

MRR: Publishing a hardcover book of photos seems like a massive undertaking, much more involved that putting out a CD or a record, can you tell us what it entailed?

Well, to start with, one fuck-up by a "major label" in Sweden, but even-

tually that was all for the best. When I decided to try again there was the money to be collected. E-mail after e-mail to people I know and don't know, phone calls abroad, and so on. Thanks to that, I've done so much with all the labels in Sweden it went kind of good, but it was a long way to raise $10,000 the DIY way. At the same time I was doing the layout for the whole book basically myself, and that proved to be quite a project. Over two months in front of the screen scanning 300 photos and doing 160 pages (some all over and over). Then just to find a printer that could make it the way I wanted it for a decent price was not easy but now when it's ready I'm really satisfied.

Comparing to releasing a record in 1,000 copies I could do that once a month if I had the money, but I'd say that one book per year is enough. The postage fees alone are a hassle; customs. My entire bedroom is filled with boxes, and the thought of making a second pressing is more than my head can take right now so if you want a copy get it now...

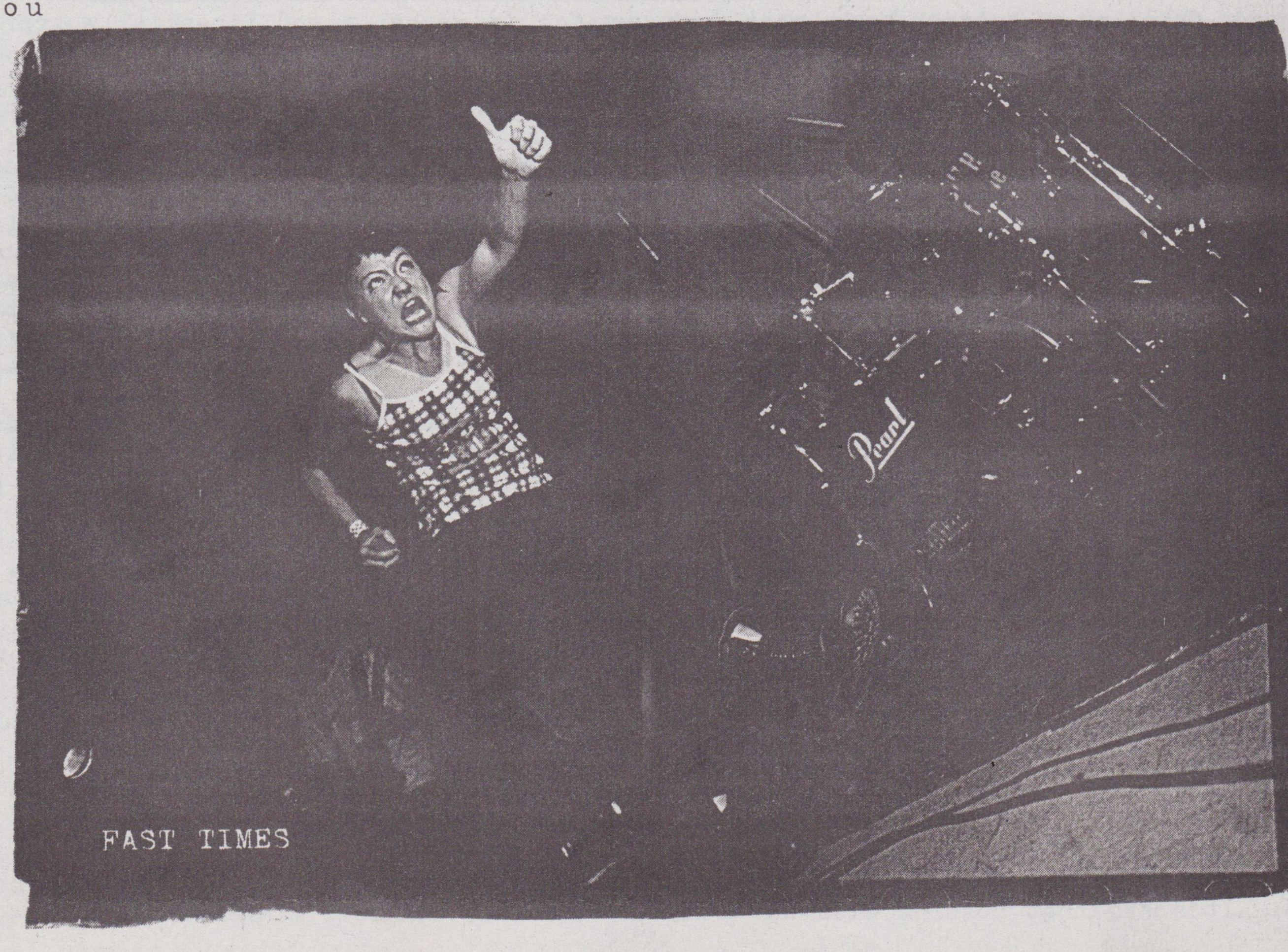
MRR: Chris Boarts of Slug and Lettuce has two distinct sets of subjects she photographs, live bands and crumbling buildings. Do you have a subject outside of live bands that you photograph?

I just started a huge project, documenting the people I know in the punk scene in mainly Sweden and Finland (I'd really like to do this together with a photographer in North America, but haven't found anyone yet). I've started some series that has been left unfinished since the book project took all my time, but nothing that's obvious as one subject. I did some skate pics this summer, but since I'm not a skater it gets too difficult. It's actually hard to find the feeling the scene has anywhere else, so for now I stick to that.

MRR: Which do you like more: If Life is a Bowl of Cherries, Fuck You Heroes, My Rules, or Welcome to Cruise Country?

Sad to say, I only have Fuck You Heroes and haven't seen the others...

MRR: Last time we talked you said you were



POINT OF FEW
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SEEIN RED

already thinking of another book, what sort of future projects do you have planned?

The second book will be about this band Outlast (from Sweden, released an LP on Underestimated some time ago), and will contain photos by me, and except for that loads of other stuff, texts, posters, flyers, and two CD's with all they have released and hopefully some live videos. Ever since they split up I've had it in my head to do the CD discography, and during Identity Parade I realized how great the book format is. If things go as I want them to I'll print the second book at the same time, and that would be of the people I'm taking photos of right now. Right now I'm more excited about this project, but I don't think that it will sell in the same way as any of the others so it has to come as a bonus if it comes at all...

MRR: They're a couple of people involved with a CD-fanzine that I'm really excited about, and at the same time I'm planning a paper fanzine/xeroxed book. Right now I'm just frustrated that school takes so much of my creativity away from my own projects, but since I get money for studying there is no choice but to do both as good as possible.

MRR: Anything you'd like to add that I overlooked?

It's sad that nothing else but "the music" is verbally and financially appreciated (there are exceptions of course) in the punk scene; it's not very easy getting anything-not even thanks-for doing record sleeves, photos, books, etc. I think I've given away a couple of thousand original prints for free, and received nothing. Ok, that's not why I do it, but the money I'm putting in to this makes it hard to keep going on just motivation, without hard cash I can't buy film, paper, etc. People and bands are used to paying for the records, they pay the print house, and vinyl maker; what happens before that is less respected. In a couple of years there might not be too many people into anything but making music, and wouldn't that be boring?

If you wanna get the book in the US or Canada contact Havoc Records (www.havocrex.com), if you're in Europe contact me:
kpasanen@uiah.fi•www.uiah.fi/ kpasanen
Thanks.

http://www.uiah.fi/ kpasanen
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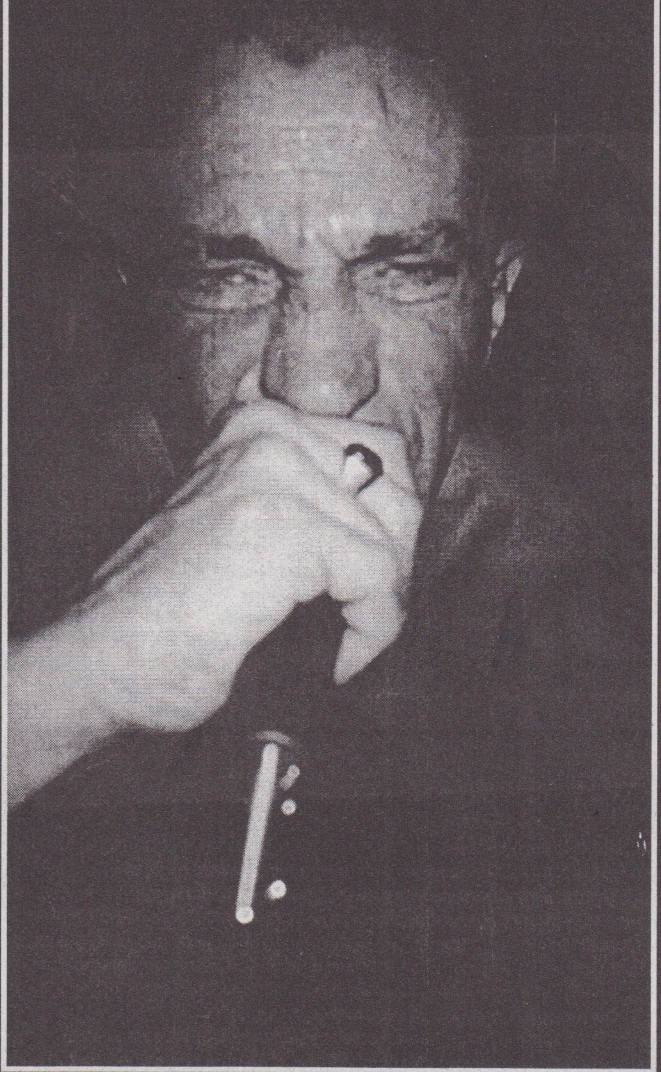
THE BUSINESS



ON AUGUST 18, 2001 THE SPIRIT OF THE STREET TOUR ROLLED INTO CHICAGO, ILLINOIS BLOWING THE DOORS OFF THE LOCAL VENUE METRO AND PULVERIZING OVER A THOUSAND PUNTERS AND PUNK ROCKERS ALIKE. HELD DOWN BY HEAVY-WEIGHT CHAMPS THE BUSINESS, WHO HAVE BEEN ROCKING COAST TO COAST, UK TO USA AND THEN BACK AGAIN FOR OVER 20 YEARS, THE TOUR INDEED HELD UP THE FUCKING "SPIRIT OF THE STREETS!" IT WAS HERE I CAUGHT UP WITH GUITARIST/SONGWRITER STEVE WHALE.

I CAN ONLY SAY I'VE NEVER HAD A BETTER TIME AND RARELY SEEN A SHOW OF THIS CALIBER...THE BUSINESS ARE ONE OF A KIND...THE NICEST, MOST FRIENDLY GUYS YOU'D EVER WANT TO MEET IN YOUR LIFE...ALWAYS EAGER TO MAKE YOU FEEL AT HOME AND TAKE YOU IN AS ONE OF THEIR OWN...SIGNING AUTOGRAPHS FOR OVER TWO HOURS AND MINGLING WITH ALL THEIR FANS IS JUST ALL IN A DAY FOR THESE BLOKES. NOT A SOUL LEFT UNFULFILLED OR UNHAPPY

ANYWAY, IF YOU WERE THERE, THEN YOU KNOW. AND IF YOU'RE IN EUROPE, LOOK OUT, 'COS YOU'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH! AS A VERY WISE MAN ONCE SAID..."STAY AT HOME WHEN THE BUSINESS ARE IN TOWN? NOW THAT'S A STUPID THING TO DO!"

INTERVIEWER: RYAN PARKER PHOTOS: MATHEW WILSON AND RYAN PARKER

MRR: How has the tour gone so far?

Steve: The tour has been exceptionally good, it's as a direct result of being on Stormy Shepards Agency as far as I'm concerned, its been very professional and its gone really, really well, and obviously everyone knows we done the Warped Tour now, for two weeks, and that was incredible…people on it were really, really nice people and they're very professional at what they do and its a great family atmosphere on there, and I was honored to be a part of it.

MRR: You enjoyed yourself, then?

Steve: Yeah, totally…

MRR: How does it compare, the Warped Tour, to European summer festivals?

Steve: The Warped Tour is like a family atmosphere going around America and its like a bit of a bubble really, sort of you know, when you wake up in the morning everything's in exactly the same place… its just, you know everyone…where as the festivals in Europe its sort of one-off, weekend type thing, you know? So you just sort of go there, play for one day, then leave, stuff like that. It's not sort of continued…

MRR: You don't see the same guys day in, day out…

Steve: No, exactly. Yeah…I just thoroughly enjoyed myself on the Warped Tour, I was pleasantly surprised.

MRR: One thing I wanted to ask…there's been quite a bit of discontent with the corporate sponsorship now, of the Warped Tour…I don't know if you've noticed that, but it's something that's come up among fans talking amongst themselves…like Target, which is like a Wal-Mart type establishment here…do you think that took from the atmosphere? Or did you notice anything at all…?

Steve: I can't…I haven't got anything to compare it to, so it's a bit hard for me to sort of make a statement on that effect…I mean, I'm only just guessing, really…I would imagine that, you know, the reason why the Warped Tour can go through the Midwest with that particular set up, is because people like Target and that pay for it…because it doesn't exactly make money there…you know, so that's my opinion, I'm not saying that it's the truth, you know, but I can only guess, really…probably see a lot more shows, you know, in places that not necessarily those kids can actually get to see…

MRR: What's been your favorite stop or place in the U.S. so far, or over the years?

Steve: Hollywood. Yeah, it was our best show and, you know, and Morrissey turned up to watch us, and it was like a big deal for us…'cos you know, we covered one of his songs, "Panic", and stuff…and it was just really great to see him come to a show, watch…and he enjoyed it, he thoroughly enjoyed it…

MRR: Has that been your first time meeting him?

Steve: Yeah, pretty much…and he just really got off on the energy from the stage and was just like a bit taken back by it. Don't know if he'd seen anything like it.

MRR: Any particularly funny things happen so far? Any 'Spinal Tap' moments on the tour or anything?

Steve: Yeah, Micky Fitz, the singer, actually bought a round of drinks, which was like a pretty big deal, you know, quite a moment for all of us…

MRR: Yeah? Is he usually absent when it comes time for his round?

Steve: Hahaha-yeah, you know the deal, you know the guy…everyone knows a guy like that…

MRR: On tour, do you wake up, get off the bus, come do your sound check…do you usually make time to be with your fans like you're doing today?

Steve: The Business have pretty much grown up, you know, in London punk environment, and one of the main things was that you mixed with the fans that come to see you, and so for us to be out in the audience talking to people who come to see us is a natural thing, and I don't know any other thing than that, even if…its just part of our nature, you know…We're appreciative, especially to people coming to see us.

MRR: Yeah, that's one of the great things about you guys, is you're accessible and you can tell you care about your fans.

Steve: Yeah, well it's just a natural thing. We grown up like that and that's the way we project. And we portray that through interviews…

MRR: At home, back in London, do you guys see each other every day, or do you rehearse-make time to rehearse once a week?

Steve: We don't actually rehearse, it's like an…It's an England thing because it's so expensive to rehearse. And so its like if we do, its just a really intense operation.

MRR: By this time, is it sort of automatic, when you're on stage?

Steve: Yeah, yeah…we get there, you know…yeah, its wrong, but, you know, we can't afford to…

MRR: How does the scene here in the States compare to the U.K., from what you've seen?

Steve: I mean, all credit to America they've basically kept our scene alive, punk scene and stuff…they pretty much lead the punk scene at the moment, especially coming from England, the Green Day/Offspring thing has just gone through the roof. I mean Offspring done two shows, 26,000 kids…all 15-16 year old kids in England, and that is like a real, real big deal over there and I pretty much suspect there'll be a youth explosion over there within a year and a half or so. I think something's gonna happen over there…

MRR: Is the market as big over there?

Steve: Yeah, for that particular punk, obviously not our punk…

MRR: Street punk, Oi…

Steve: Street punk, yeah, is not really known, so… I say all credit to America, they basically keeping it going…Now as regard to Europe, the street punk thing has got really, really big…its fuckin'… it's really huge. Massive over there. So I'm really gonna to look forward to going, taking the Spirit of the Street tour over to Europe, and seeing what the response over there is, 'cause its all looking good over there at the moment. So England, I'm afraid, is behind the times at the moment…haha.

MRR: Is violence at shows generally a thing of the past?

Steve: Yeah, I would say, yeah…speaking from a second generation punk at that particular time, and knowing first generation punk, uh, punk was all about violence in England, you know, it was just like thrashing in the pit. It originated with the pogoing and, you know, punching your friend in the face, things like that-haha-it was like this real twisted mentality going on and that's basically where my explanation of violence comes from, you know…But, as regards to punk's progression now, it isn't about that, its about, you know, watching a band, and from a street punk point of view, living the life…And that's a really important statement right there, living the life…as yourself does, and, you know, we all live the life. We do it for nothing…we love punk so much, we do it for nothing or no money at all…

MRR: What was it like growing up in London as a teenager?

Steve: I grew up on first generation punk, so that was my life, every night, watching the Pistols, whatever, all these fantastic, great bands you know. Every night being programmed what punk was about…I came along on the second generation, with as you know, Blitz…Cockney Rejects…

MRR: Was the politics of the time you were a teenager something you were very aware of?

Steve: Uh, yeah. With regard to punk, which I feel was one of the greatest things it ever done, was the Pistols coming along," just that statement was phenomenal, and the environment at the time, when I was growing up being a punk was…everything was against the system… you'd have 2,000 punks in the King's Road, and it was just, it was literally anarchy. Everyone had the mind to cause anarchy in the streets you know, just run riot, smash windows and things like that…against the police and stuff…I can even remember Joe Strummer and members of the Clash leading these you know, these riot things…and after that there would be a show somewhere and everyone would go to the show and things like this, you know, but…at the time it was exciting because you just felt you had a chance to change things, you know, and what you didn't like with your society, which was transferred on into what the Business becoming the actual social commentary which is predominant in a lot of the Business stuff, you know…

MRR: Do you think that idealism, that feeling you can change things is gone? Do you think we'll ever…do you think that will ever come back with a generation of youth again? What was at that time?

Steve: Yeah…I mean to a certain extent…I think its gonna become more predominant, especially maybe in America, with this Bush guy…I got a real bad feeling about this guy…

MRR: He's a cunt.

Steve: Yeah…I think it's gonna be…punk music's going to be more aggressive and its going to be more social comment, more in line with street punk. So I suspect maybe street punk might grow a lot bigger, and a lot of the bands listening to what's being said will take it one step further, and a lot of the punk bands at the top now will start making comments to that effect, and you know, start leading, rather than going along with it…I hope so anyway…'cos I think that basically is our job, I really believe that. That's our job. To make a new generation aware of how things are wrong.

MRR: Through your lyrics, and through your music, you educate, the masses, the youth…everyone you know…I consider myself somewhat learned about a lot of the things going on in the UK, but I still learn stuff all the time from your lyrics…like Belmarsh Prison…

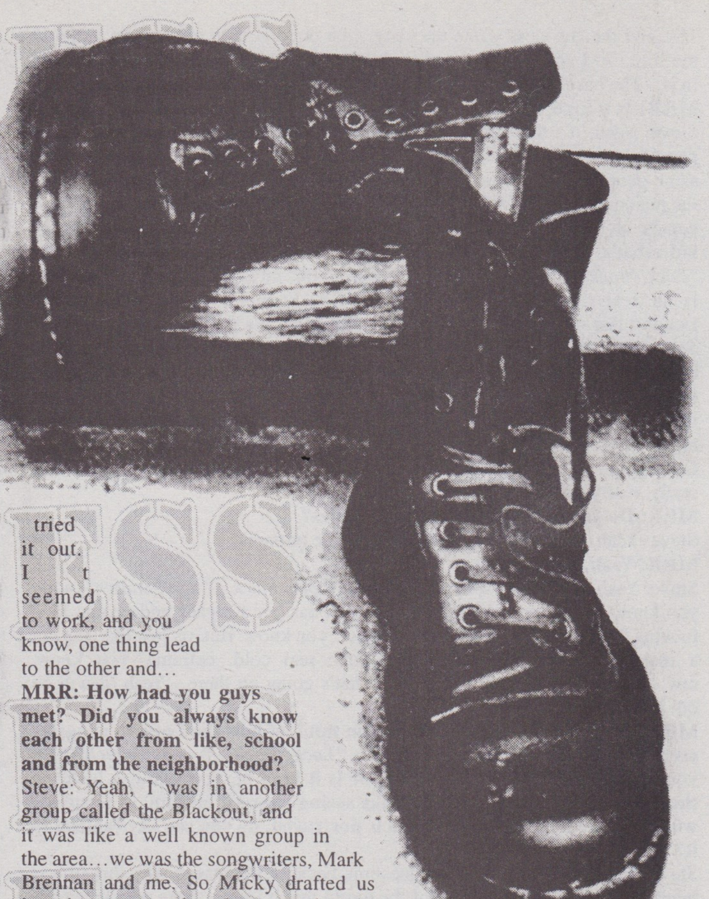
Steve: Yeah, that's why the Amnesty thing is on there. Because you know, obviously, that's a local prison, so and the guy, a friend of ours, was murdered, basically. That's my opinion. He was murdered. He was kicked to death, and the basis of the story, as you read it, is the governor of the prison went on TV and in the newspapers and made a statement to the effect of that he will only take complaints from the prisoner…Now the prisoner's dead, so that's the sort of audacity that these guys have got, you know, and I totally disagree with that. And that is why the song is featured on there and that is why the Amnesty web site is on there and Howard League, 'cos they're running the campaigns and stuff like that. So kids can check out the web sites and if they want to get involved they do and if they don't they don't, but they're aware of it.

MRR: Yeah, the Business has always taken a stand, which is something. What were some influences, or was there a particular gig or a band that changed your life?

Steve: Yeah, most definitely "Anarchy in the UK" by the Sex Pistols, when that come out, and *Never Mind the Bollocks…* album, it completely changed my life, as probably yourself, you had a personal experience, some record come out and you just went "wow, that's my life, right there."

MRR: When do you first remember hearing "Oi" in reference to a scene our a style of music? Do you remember a particular moment, when you first noticed a cohesion?

Steve: Imagery, was, what I think you're talking about, that concrete Housing Estate, or projects as you call them over here, and the working class, raw feel about and everything that was working class that was my identification and everything that I



totally identified with, because that's the way it is. Its really hard to understand from America what the London, east London, dockers, working class…attitude was…it was real raw, looking after your own, all those clichés, sayings, you know, pride in yourself, integrity, loyalty to your friends. You stick together and all that working class thing. Unless you actually come from that, it's really, really hard to understand…But all that we can do is project that and hope that they can identify with some of it. That loyalty to your friends. And just 'cos you haven't got a lot of money and the kids with the BMW's don't mean to say that you've got less. You've got more than them, because they're weak 'cos they got no substance at all, etc. You know… what I'm trying to say… I'm trying to twist it around because society's so based on the fact the haves and have-nots; you've got money, you haven't, and stuff like that, and it's just the working class thing we're trying to project a little bit to make kids feel a little bit better.

MRR: Is it important for punk to be social commentary?

Steve: In my opinion, yeah…in my opinion. And you know, that's why I tried to do "Code Red" about…well I'm not allowed to say his name now…the "Code Red" song…The thing that he done, was so audacious that it showed the authorities up…We've been told by his solicitors that if his name comes up in any press, they're gonna keep him even longer. He's done his prison sentence and now they're keeping him longer because of the audacity. He showed them up and stuff like that. And now he's pretty much in a precarious position. That is another story of our old friends…you know I know it's like a prison thing again, but that's pretty much our environment. If you're not from that environment it seems like, "that's a bit predominant," or something like that…its just social comment, yeah.

MRR: There must be, or is there, a certain amount of pride in being like godfathers of the Oi, street punk scene, like originators, and what you've accomplished over the years...

Steve: I've got no pride in it, so I don't really think about it, but I just want to maybe represent a little piece of that environment in '82, and bring it to the year 2000 and hope that we can put something positive, extremely positive into the punk scene over here and Europe, etc. and the rest of the world 'cause that's what we want to do. Make a positive environment for kids to join bands, to do fanzines, write for Maximum Rocknroll, and you know, be on TV, do films, write plays. That's what we want tell kids to do. That's what we're all about.

MRR: What's the songwriting process like for you guys? I know you do most of the writing, and you wrote the whole last album…

Steve: Yeah, the "No Mercy" album was really a tough one 'cause of the success of the "Truth" album, and then I come up to this, and it was like what I done was the songwriting style is a classic 1982 style but with a year 2000 sound. And that's what I basically done, sort of just reverted back to the old Oi style of songwriting and then just give it that new sound, so that's basically what you're listening to right now.

MRR: How does the older material compare to the newer stuff, do you see like an evolution or a progression in your eyes of what you've done, now as opposed to stuff on your collections, "Best of the Business" and things like that?

Steve: Yeah, it's just a period in time, you know. I really sort of believe the new album's is going to be like a real classic, because as a songwriter, it's got so many layers on it…I'm probably not explaining it really well…it's like a film, a classic film. You keep watching it loads of times, and the reason why is because it's got little bits in the background that you never noticed before, but they're intent to be put there so you watch it again, "Oh, that makes sense…"that links to that", or like *The Matrix* film or something, "that links to that", and you just wonder why you keep watching it, that's the sort of process that's on the new *No Mercy* album.

MRR: I know, I've listened to it ever since the day it came out, like once a day or several times a day…I play guitar, I learned how to play the album in a couple days…

Steve: Haha, well yeah…it's easy…

MRR: I mean that's great, you know, to learn how to play something you enjoy…

Steve: Yeah, its good…Yeah, thank you, yeah

MRR: What were some of the factors that lead to the breakup, and later the triumphant reformation?

Steve: Yeah…I mean, the early days was a tornado…I didn't really know what was going on most of the time; we was in the eye of the tornado…it was like, front cover this, you know, in the charts thing, and all this…it was absolute chaos…And then it just went as fast as it come. So and then there was like this seven year gap. Just messin' about, doing little, you know, silly things, and…But the actual process of us reforming, which was pretty much six years ago, seven years ago…was Micky Fitz, the singer, rang me and said would you participate in raising money for cancer, for a famous football guy, Bobby Moore, who was captain of the England football team when we won the World Cup. He died and we was going to raise money for his cancer thing…So I said yeah, of course I'll do that; that's not a problem…played a show and next thing we know its like we're inundated with calls to tour here, tour there…So, we tried it out. It seemed to work, and you know, one thing lead to the other and…

MRR: How had you guys met? Did you always know each other from like, school and from the neighborhood?

Steve: Yeah, I was in another group called the Blackout, and it was like a well known group in the area…we was the songwriters, Mark Brennan and me. So Micky drafted us into the group, and we been together since the "Suburban Rebels" album, pretty much…

MRR: Is there a song that you've done that seems to you quintessential Business, one that you think of as "The Business"?

Steve: On the new album, or just generally?

MRR: In your career and the new album.

Steve: All the group like the first track on the new album, which is "Takers & Users", a lot of people sort of…"It's not like the Business style", you know, and that's why we like it, you know…it's just…we like it, so…that's really good…Um, the other one we like playing is "One Thing Left To Say" funny enough; 'cos that's just a little bit different from what we usually do.

It's a really hard question to ask people in groups and that because…you know…

MRR: I suppose all your songs are like children, you know…how do you choose a favorite…?

Steve: Yeah, yeah…bit of a toughie really, but I enjoy playing them every time. So…

MRR: What bands do you like hooking up with when you're in the States? When you come here do you visit anybody when you get a chance, or that you like to try to get on the bill with you when you play or visit certain cities?

Steve: Yeah…obviously everyone knows, you know, Rancid are, like, good friends…obviously the Dropkicks, we're proud of them guys, what they done from the street punk thing…you know, our New York hardcore family, you know, Agnostic Front, Madball…

MRR: Yeah, that's kind of an easy one…you can kind of tell who you guys have a kindred spirit with.

Steve: Yeah…its just…there's a hell of a lot of bands, you know…

MRR: What are some bands, UK acts, that people should watch out for, pay attention to, that right now are just under the cusp, that people haven't heard of ? Is there anything, like,…UK groups in the street punk and Oi scene that you think are really great and deserve more notoriety than they're getting?

Steve: (silence…in thought)

MRR: hahaha

Steve: I don't…I'm not…I don't think so at the moment, but what I'm going to say is, I think in a year's time, it's going to be phenomenal. I think you're going to be inundated with English bands coming over here…

MRR: Tell me about the new movie *"Hell to Pay"*…what was your involvement with it, and will it be released in the States?

Steve: Yeah, as it stands from when I left…obviously I wrote the title track for the film…the Business…it's featured on the "No Mercy" album, which is track

16…and the Business wrote the song…the director then offered me a part in the film. So I got an acting part in the film, and I just play a "good" bad guy in it…The basic story is Kane and Abel, but in a gangster setting in London…

MRR: Is it kind of like a Guy Ritchie type of film…

Steve: Yeah, it's the same…it's not Guy Ritchie directing, but it's the same people that were in "*Lock, Stock, and Two Smoking Barrels*", "*Snatch*"; it's the same people in this film…and, but the interesting thing is the guy that plays the main part, which is Dave Courtney, he's a friend of mine, he is the original person in "*Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*"; The guy with the kid…that's what that character's based on…my friend. All the stories from "*Lock, Stock…*" and stuff like that, are from this guy…He's the real deal. That is the real gangster, right there…now "*The Sopranos*", now, were over in London last month getting stories off this guy…it's for the new series "*The Sopranos*" which is quite interesting…But this guy is the real deal, and he basically, and this film crew have used every…if it's a prostitute, it's a prostitute in the film; if it's a drug dealer, it's a drug dealer…They've used all the real people in this film, and have had two camera shots going at the same time, to catch their facial expressions…everything…just going, filming, filming, filming and trying to get the film so raw and real, its unbelievable…And it is really, really stark…

MRR: Do you think it will be in the States?

Steve: Yeah, there is a deal being done at the moment…

MRR: Yeah, I can't wait to see it…

Steve: Yeah, but don't expect it to be like "*Lock, Stock…*" and "*Snatch*", with, you know, all nice ending type thing…this has got a higher body count than fucking "*Private Ryan*"…in five minutes…you know. But, its just like, it's got a real high body count…It's just gone real cold, extreme, you know, raw…film…And so, that's basically what's going on there…Yeah, it will be out in the States.

MRR: Just on a side note, what do you think of how the London gangster scene is portrayed in those movies like "*Lock, Stock…*" and "*Snatch*"? Do you think there's some true to life, or is it kind of, you know, a lark? Is there anything to it? Is it kind of like seeing yourself on film, so to speak, when you see how the underworld is portrayed, do you see any realism to it?

Steve" Yeah, well that's a good question, because the reason why this film is being done, is to show the rest of the world that it isn't…those people actually playing those parts…are crap…they're actors trying to be gangsters…these guys in this film…this is why it's being done. They've used the real people that "*Lock, Stock…*" and "*Snatch*" are all about. They've used 'em, and just, like, made it how it should be, you know? That's the deal. In England, it's such a big deal, this film…It's talked about in press, national press, TV, programs about it…everything…It's like a real big deal…

MRR" Did you know Lenny McLean? (real life London hard-man and villain; played 'Barry the Baptist' in "*Lock, Stock…*")

Steve: Yeah, I met him a few times…obviously he's dead…but that's the sort of thing we're talking about…that's really smart you said that…

MRR: Yeah, I read his book…("The Guv'nor" by Lenny McLean)

Steve: Yeah, but right there, you're right on the button, because that's where it all come from. When they was filming him, and they're seeing the way they managed to get him to act his natural thing, and it was just so raw on film, that's where the idea come from…They just took it a step further into this film…

MRR: So when do you think it'll be out…within this year?

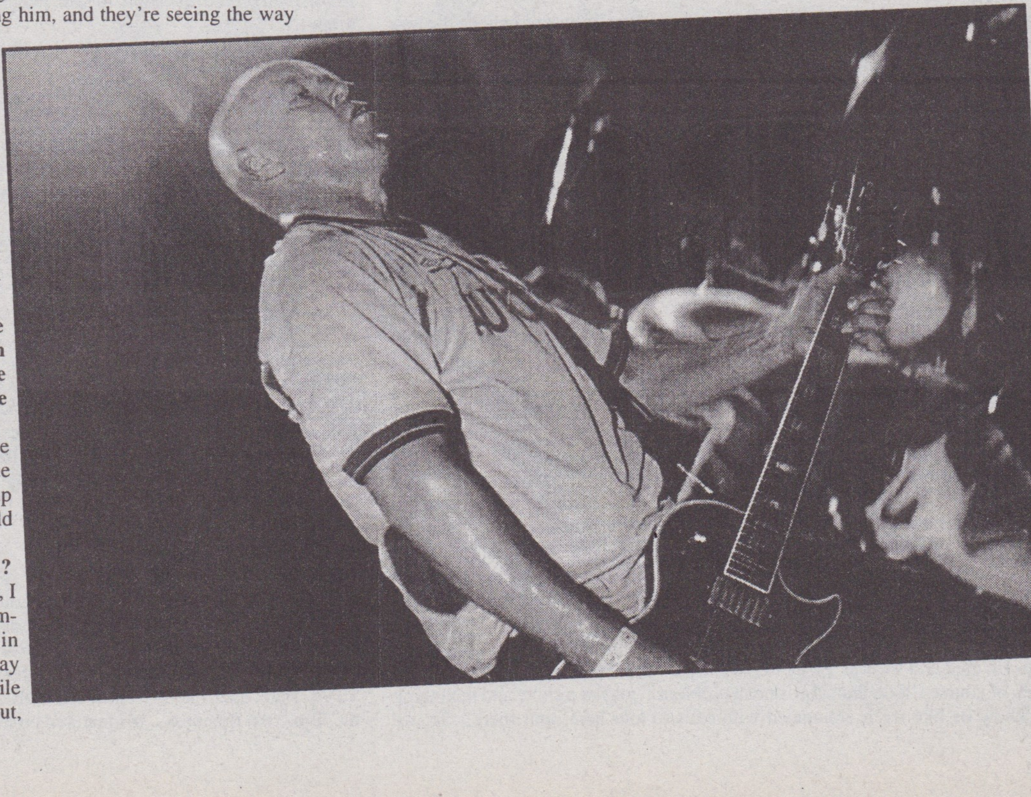
Steve: I was told in London…September. I mean it's already been screened in Cannes at the festival there…yeah, so, it's pretty much not to far away…

MRR: What's in the future? Are there any plans for a new album yet? Or continue the Spirit Of The Street tour in Europe…what is the future as far as you can see?

Steve: Yeah, well as you just said, the Spirit Of The Street tour will continue over in Europe, and it actually ends up in London, funny enough. So it should be quite interesting…

MRR: Then it's time for a break…?

Steve: Yeah…go back…I don't know, I might be wrong, but we might be coming back to the States in February…'cos there's a bit of a delay in the States, you know. It takes a while for everyone to realize the album's out, and once they do they want to listen to it. So, you know, we want to push it just a little bit further and come back in February if we can…



MRR: Any plans to work with the Dropkick Murphys again?

Steve: I've…you know what, I really think it'd be a good idea now…the Business and Dropkick…

MRR: It was a brilliant album…I love it; it's a great album and it's a great idea…

Steve: Yeah, well that was just something that come up from the original Business/Dropkicks American Tour…We was in the van, just saying…'cos I always had this thing, what would the Dropkicks and the Business crossed, like a hybrid…what would it sound like? And I spoke to the guitarist at the time, which was Rick, and he said we should do it, you know, why not? But I also mentioned it to Curtis at Taang, and he must have thought about it, and then I think it was about two years later, he just suddenly appeared, the studio's done, go in the studio, just like that. And we was just in there, and we ended up in there a bloody week doing it…but it was just…I love that "Mob Mentality" track so much. It's just…it's just great to hear the two bands like that…

MRR: I also like how you covered the Faces song("Borstal Boys") and that one by the Who("The Kids Are All Right")…those were great…If it weren't for music, what do you see the band doing? What do you see for yourself and…Is it true Micky's an electrician?

Steve: Yeah…I don't know if he's still doing it though…he doesn't seem to be doing a lot when he gets home…yeah, pretty much… I think you know what we do anyway…I work in the film game…

MRR: Right, you'd probably be doing film if not for the band, maybe…

Steve: Yeah…

MRR: …working in some creative medium…

Steve: Yeah, I work for BBC…sometimes work for BBC of ITV or something…

MRR: Anyway, last question…is it all still fun for you?

Steve: Yeah…it's more fun now, believe it or not…It's just, it really is… I mean, especially, you know, this tour…just made it so much…worth it…Just doing the Warped Tour, being on tour with AF…It's just like, as far as I'm concerned, we've reached the top… Leave Home Agency, that's our new agency we've just gone to, and it's just…it's so well organized and professional…it's a relief for me, because you don't have to worry about anything, you know.…everything's just done, you know it's going to be done…it's professional…you know. So now I can concentrate on making some good songs, you know…that's my job…and being social commentator of course, hahaha…

MRR: So anything else you'd like to add…at all?

Steve: Yeah, if there's anyone out there who's actually got a drink off of Micky Fitz, I'd really like to meet him, 'cos we're trying to work out how he's actually done it, haha, so that's all I'd like to say…and check the new Business website out which is www.oithebusiness.com

MRR: Right, well thanks a lot, Steve, thanks for everything…

Steve: Great interview…really good…and it's a pleasure to be interviewed by Maximum Rocknroll…yeah…

ASSERT

, THE ONLY BAND IN THE UK WHO CAN CONFIDENTLY STATE THAT THEY TRULY LIVE BY THEIR CREDO—"ANY SCENE, ANY PLACE, ANY TIME," HAVE FINALLY COME OF AGE WITH THE RELEASE OF THEIR THIRD ALBUM, INSURRECTION ROCKS, WHICH HAS ALMOST CAPTURED THE FURY OF THEIR SHOWS ON DISC. IF NEGATIVE APPROACH WERE AROUND TODAY, THEY'D BE CONSTANTLY LOOKING OVER ONE SHOULDER, AFRAID THAT THESE GUYS WERE GOING TO ENGULF THEM AND SLOWLY TAKE OVER. ERSTWHILE VOCALIST BRITT WAS KIND ENOUGH TO SUPPLY THE FOLLOWING ANSWERS WHEN I CAUGHT UP WITH HIM. ..

***MRR:* Back to basics, Assert—The who, the when, the where, the how, the why?**

BRITT: We formed around late '95, but we didn't start gigging until '97. Who was in the band doesn't matter. It was a way of unleashing some of my frustrations and staying out of prison and off the drink and drugs. Some of my best friends have died under the influence of drugs and I would say that all of my closest friends have been in prison. I use the band to 'get rid' of my anger.

***MRR: Insurrection Rocks*, your new record is a marked departure from your previous recorded output, revealing a harder edge to Assert. Was this a conscious decision on the bands part, if so, why? If not, what do you think influenced you this time around that led to developing this sound?**

BRITT: With the new album I wanted the music to rank alongside the message—in fact, we worked harder on the music than we did on the songs 'messages.' The second full length was a totally political record where the music was secondary, having done that the music from now on will be at least as important, if not more important, than the lyrical content. The 'harder edge' was something I wanted us to strive for and with a new band around me we have the ability to create much faster and more aggressive music. Our live shows were more a representation of what we are about, we just needed to get that anger and ferocity into the studio. As a unit we are now more capable of producing the kind of intensity that the old line-up could not come up with. I realized that it was time to raise the stakes and shut a few peoples mouths, and I think with the new full length we have pulled that off.

***MRR:* As stalwarts of the UK scene, and having played throughout Europe, how do you think the scene here compares to the scene on the mainland?**

BRITT: One major difference between us and mainland Europe is that we are separated by a stretch of water which makes it expensive to travel to the mainland and creates this 'island' mentality that we have. The U.K is a very backward nation in many ways; in the economic sense we are way, way behind the rest of Europe, our health service is poor, housing is below standard, we work longer hours, everything is so expensive; there are just so many things that make us one of the worst countries in Europe. With regards to music, too many U.K bands think it's a big deal to get a bit of popularity on internet forums and play two gigs a month at some self-congratulatory all dayer full of kids who think that represents the 'scene'. Then everyone splits off into their little grouplets and bitches and backstabs and tries to create 20 different scenes all over the country, and in no time at all a tiny (and insignificant) country like the U.K is divided up into it's little hardcore clans all based on vested interest and control.

Be vibrant. That's where the answer lies—for working class people to become involved in the Punk / HC scene again and sweep the new hippies aside. Are we stalwarts of the 'scene'? We're still prepared to get out there and carry the flag to pave the way for the next generation of real Punkers and HC kids.

MRR: **Assert seem to have a far broader outlook, focusing on political and social (both personal and in relation to society in general) issues rather than the typical, tried and tested Punk/HC 'messages.' Do you think that politics still have a role to play in the HC/Punk scene, and can music ever be an effective medium for change—socially, politically and culturally?**

BRITT: Maybe our outlook is broader because we come from council estate backgrounds where we have experienced family members and friends being involved in trade unions and being political activists. We just tend to articulate the day to day thoughts and views of normal working class people. As long as poverty, inequality, poor housing, unequal educational access and a poor 'health' service exist (and many other issues besides) then there will be a role for politics within the so-called 'scene.' The inequalities are evident in Punk and Hardcore—just look at the myth of 'positive' bands, and those that are labeled 'negative.' The so-called 'positive' bands contain the nice, middle class boys and girls and the mythical 'negative' bands contain the scumbag, working class types!!

Once again, we see the idea of 'division of labor', between those who have a 'worth' and those who are 'worthless.' If the 'scene' is a mere microcosm of society—and inequality exists in society—then there is going to be inequality within the 'scene'. Our, if you like, 'morals' are different to those of middle class people in that, for us, it is a constant battle to gain a tolerable level of existence—and living conditions—and this battle is at the fore front of our thoughts, actions and articulations.

It's a different 'class' outlook and perspective. Theirs (the middle class) is to accumulate, own and control, hire and fire. It's a different historical role and very different moralistic outlook.

MRR: **Treading the same ground for a minute, and harking back to one of the HC statements that always used to be thrown around...unity. Do you think that we'll ever see a unified Punk / HC scene, or have we divided and categorized ourselves to a point where we've become our own worst enemies? Can we ever achieve that goal? Is there any solution to the problem?**

BRITT: It's hard to unify with someone from a different background—I tend to befriend those with a similar history to mine and those who have been around the scene for a while. A lot of the divisions are based on class difference and vested interest. The 'scene' is not separate from society, so the changes that take place within society will manifest themselves within the so-called 'scene.' The shit is going to hit the fan in the U.K during this decade and many changes will take place, and if there is a need to 'unite' behind a banner or goal, then those reasons will reveal themselves. I have no solution to the 'problem', if it is indeed a 'problem' at all.

MRR: **Time to clear the air a little. What are some of the most popular misconceptions that you've heard regarding Assert, and how would you answer your so-called 'critics'?**

BRITT: A popular misconception in the past is that we have had 'label' people and 'agents' working for us—utter bullshit! We've been a D.I.Y band for many years and have worked very hard and gotten off our own arses to create our own opportunities. Most of the 'donkey' work is carried out by yours truly, and we have a philosophy—"Any Time, Any Place, Any Scene." Another misconception that has reared it's ugly head came in the form of the lie that I go around beating people up. If I beat up the 'Sound Man' at your local club or one of your mates, you would know it—trust me!!! As for answering critics—Fuck 'em. I like a bit of criticism, it adds some spice to life!!!

MRR: **How healthy do you think the HC / Punk scene is at the moment? Do you think that it has progressed or regressed as a movement since you first became involved?**

BRITT: I think the scene is pretty healthy. There are still a lot of bands coming through, a lot of kids prepared to put shows on. More and more zines seem to be emerging which is good, but I don't think it's healthy for one fanzine to 'rule the roost', so to speak. However, there are people who are still prepared to put their money where their mouths are, so all in all, things are pretty healthy.

The scene has changed a lot—there is less involvement from working class people and this in turn has led to the 'watering down' and more conservative outlook of the scene. It's much more 'safe' and 'unchallenging' and has less danger and therefore less excitement. All this will change at some stage in the future though.

MRR: **Back to the whole theme of Unity, but moving away from music...do you think that we will ever see a unified Europe and what, in your opinion, are the advantages or disadvantages of a singular European state?**

BRITT: I like to think that at some time in the future we will see a united socialist states of Europe, not a caricature of Stalinist communism but a system based on need not profit where no 'caste' can elevate itself above the rest of society putting an end to the national 'state' and national 'boundaries', eliminating the control of Europe (and the world) by big

“ANY TIME, ANY PLACE, ANY SCENE”

Straight Edge

business and it's state appendages. The advantages are pretty obvious. The disadvantages? No-one would be disadvantaged with the end of the profit system. The withering away of capitalism and all it's archaic vestiges will be an advantage to all of us.

***MRR:* With the end of the Cold War, Allied Governments and NATO seem to have been actively seeking the chance to become involved in armed engagements and 'police actions.' Why, in your opinion, have they pursued this role?**

BRITT: NATO is the puppet of the US administration and the USA wishes to police the world in order to make sure that it's economic interests are not destroyed by 'little conflicts.' It needs to keep trade in operation and look for new markets to exploit. War can also mean big profits for the arms companies but the US will make sure that it owns the latest High Tech weaponry and gadgetry whilst selling it's obsolete shit to the 'Smaller Nations.' The US administration has to keep coming up with new bogeymen who threaten it's 'New World Order' in order to justify it's gargantuan military budget whilst it's citizens sleep on the streets and lie in poverty. With the significant rise in anti-capitalist action and demonstration any 'uprising' both internal and external needs to be put down with extreme brutality in order to send out the message that you shouldn't fuck with the capitalist so-called super power.

***MRR:* What kind of problems do you think humanity is going to face as we enter the 21st century?**

BRITT: I think Climate Change is a real worry, but old G.W. Bush still says "Fuck it." The planet could flood, and/or burn at any fucking time but the multi-national corporations still want to suck the juice out of it. The same concerns that were evident in the 20th century are going to plague us—poverty, starvation, homelessness and so on. A real concern is how the worlds media is owned and controlled by a handful of men and how very little 'news' actually appears in the papers or on radio or TV. This is linked to the idea of 'celebrity' and encouraging people to become 'celebrities' rather than taking control of their own lives and ultimately taking control of the state and society in general. Trying to create a tolerable level of existence for oneself and family is not something that can be turned into 'Reality TV' or a fucking docu-soap, it's real fucking life!!!

***MRR:* Time to open the big nasty. Religion. Is there such a thing as "God," or is humanity the master of it's own destiny? Is death really the end, or is there more to existence than the physical plain?**

BRITT: If all living things are composed of matter, and our limbs, bones, brains etc. are made from a molecular structure, in other words 'matter', and if everything around us is made up of 'matter', how can there be a non-material world in a place devoid of time, space and calculation?

Religion was used at a time when scientific technique was at such low level of development that it could not be used to provide the so-called answers to life's questions. I believe that science can provide the answers to modern questions. The problem is that whoever owns and controls the levers of power in society controls what science can be used for. In a capitalist society it is used to further profit for big business and not to cure disease and so forth. The belief in heaven and hell has been used to keep people shackled to outdated and archaic institutions and to limit our freedom as individuals.

***MRR:* Back to music. Is the HC/Punk scene still a predominantly sexist and to some degree homophobic, boys only club?**

BRITT: I don't think so. This is just a way of telling tales about certain bands and individuals to shoulder them with that 'negative' label. Obviously we need more women involved and we don't see a great deal of black faces these days, but there are plenty of multi-racial, non-sexist people involved in the scene. Every scene has it's own little cliques and 'boys clubs', and it comes down to whether people are prepared to tolerate certain things. I feel a number of checks and balances do take place, but we need more involvement from a fresh layer of individuals to sweep away the 'stagnation' and 'safety' of the scene—the same applies to any scene, anywhere in the world—that allows any reactionary elements to gain a foothold. Obviously, all those things exist, but plenty of positive, progressive people are involved in the scene as well.

***MRR:* Has the mainstream acceptance of Punk affected your outlook on the scene at all? Have things changed since MTV became involved, and if so, how?**

BRITT: One of the major changes concerns the radical, rebellious side of things. There's 'no edge' these days and it all seems so devoid of genuine anger and frustration, that it's almost become de-politicized and the antithesis of what it's supposed to be about. These days a lot of bands seem to crave popularity and acceptance, and it's become more about style and image rather than substance. Tattoo's and facial piercings have become acceptable and mainstream and that's not what punk is about. MTV and the big companies have turned it into a just another high street fashion to be bought and sold. I find it confusing when you see a nice middle class boy from a nice middle class background with a neck tattoo!! 'Back In The Day' only the real 'tough guys' had things like neck tattoos. Now we're seeing our mothers and auntie's with facial piercings and tattoos…fucking crazy!!!

***MRR:* The Assert manifesto. What is it, and how does it translate into the daily activity and life of the band?**

BRITT: Our philosophy is "Any Time, Any Place, Any Scene"—just get out there and tour as often as possible. We love to get out there and play and don't care how many people turn up as long as there is some sort of gathering.

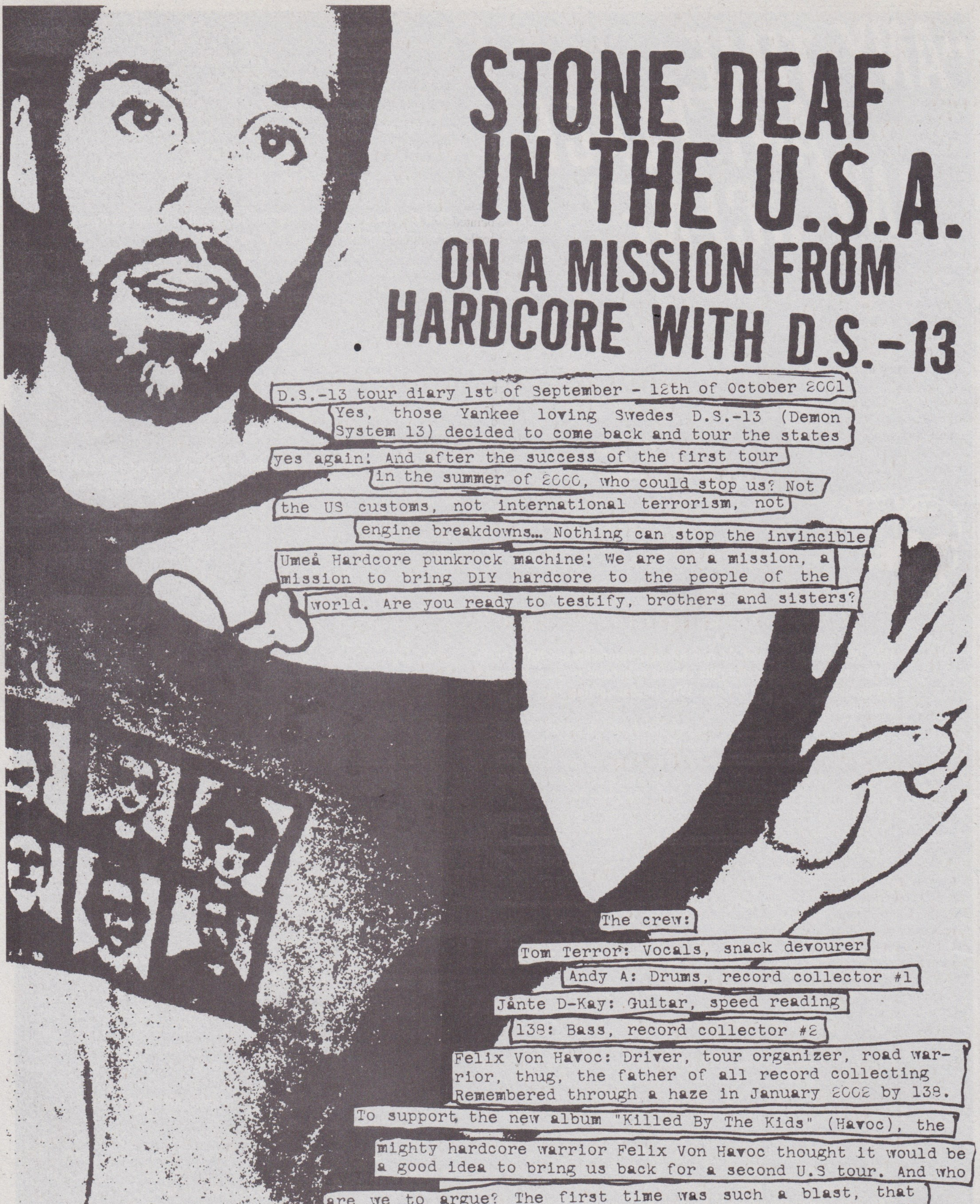
We try to live in an ethical way, a couple of us are SxE and vegetarians, we won't shop at GAP, won't eat at McDonalds and things like that, but I wouldn't say that we are the most PC band on the planet. We just do what feels right for us. I'm not a close minded person, I think certain things are wrong, but I will respect your freedom of choice to eat meat and take drugs and so on. There is only so much one can do within the confines of the capitalist system, our main goal is top use propaganda effectively against the system and work toward it's downfall.

***MRR:* Crystal ball time…what would you like the future to hold for Assert, and what do you think it does hold?**

BRITT: I would just like to have the opportunity to carry on touring as regularly as possible, and to release a record every year. I like to keep busy with the band and tour, tour, tour and tour again!! Our third album is coming out on Three Days Dead Records, and it's called *Insurrection Rocks*, with a possible US release. Hopefully there's going to be more tours followed by the release of out fourth full length, which has the working title of *Clause 4, pt.4.*

***MRR:* Last words—spout off about whatever you want to, the floor is yours…**

BRITT: I would just like to thank everyone who has stuck with us over the years, given up their beds, fed us, tattooed us, released our records, given us a show, come to see us or helped us in any way. Thanks to all our friends in England, Scotland, North and South Ireland, Wales and parts of Europe, East and West. A big thanks to all the bands we have played with and **'HELLO'** to our friends in the USA!!!



STONE DEAF IN THE U.$.A.

ON A MISSION FROM HARDCORE WITH D.S.-13

D.S.-13 tour diary 1st of September - 12th of October 2001

Yes, those Yankee loving Swedes D.S.-13 (Demon System 13) decided to come back and tour the states yes again! And after the success of the first tour in the summer of 2000, who could stop us? Not the US customs, not international terrorism, not engine breakdowns... Nothing can stop the invincible Umeå Hardcore punkrock machine! We are on a mission, a mission to bring DIY hardcore to the people of the world. Are you ready to testify, brothers and sisters?

The crew:

Tom Terror: Vocals, snack devourer
Andy A: Drums, record collector #1
Jånte D-Kay: Guitar, speed reading
138: Bass, record collector #2
Felix Von Havoc: Driver, tour organizer, road warrior, thug, the father of all record collecting

Remembered through a haze in January 2002 by 138.

To support the new album "Killed By The Kids" (Havoc), the mighty hardcore warrior Felix Von Havoc thought it would be a good idea to bring us back for a second U.S tour. And who are we to argue? The first time was such a blast, that another six weeks on the road, just a year after the last one, seemed like a dream. We would later end up regretting doing six weeks instead of just four or five, but I'll get to that. Since Marc from Vitamin X did a very good guide to touring the USA in #223, I'm not gonna go into all the preparations.

Friday 31st of August: We arrive at Fort Havoc in **Minneapolis MN** after another glorious ride with Iceland Air (Vegan food? What's that?), and after Felix treats us to some yummy Vietnamese food we immediately start working. The covers for the special limited Thrash Fest eBay version of the "Killed By The Kids" need to be hand-screened, all 300 of them. Plus there's tons more shit to do, like going through the equipment and making sure nothing broke during the journey across the Atlantic, sorting out the merchandise etc. Fukk, it's like I never left this place. Except for the fact that there's a canon (I kid you not!), surveillance cameras and a fence outside the front door, nothing's changed. Felix looks exactly the same, so does his room mate Michelle, Dylan is still drunk and I guess I look exactly the same as last year too. Nothing changes in the punk world of fashion. Felix is super stressed out because of the Thrash Fest on Sunday, and things don't get better when Texas pirates Spazm 151 don't show up at the airport like they are supposed to.

We had no problem getting into the country. The custom tried fukking with me though, like three different persons asked me very suspiciously who paid for my ticket. What?! I'm fukking 23 years old, I pay for it myself! Who else would do it? I ain't no scrub.

Saturday 1st of September: Get up at eight and continue screen printing covers pretty much right away. Oh, the glorious rock star life. The reward for all the hard work comes courtesy of Luce´s Pizza, the best fukking pizza I've ever had. Tons of different vegan toppings to choose from, the place is run by crusties (well, sorta..) and our friend Brie gets us a discount. Thanx! We load up the car and haul ass to **Eau Claire, WI**, for the first show. Felix has sold the van we used last year to Tear It Up, and instead he's got a pick-up truck! This thing is huge, it's a monster, a behemoth, the truck to end all trucks! We sacrifice some comfort for the sake of a much bigger storage compartment, since there's no way we could've fit all the records and merch in a normal van. Anyway, the show in Eau Claire turns out to be at an American Legion Hall, which is kinda weird for us Swedes. I mean, as I understand it these halls are for war veterans and Sweden hasn't been to war for like 200 years. And yet, we still sing about it all the time. What is wrong with us?! Flags and patriotic slogans and shit decorate the walls, but as far as venues go it isn't bad. We pull of a pretty decent set, considering it's the first show on the tour. At least the kids seemed to enjoy it, plenty of moshing and singing along going on in the pit. But we sound like a weaker Ace Of Base compared to the awesome thunder of **9 Shocks Terror**. They load in more amps than Rolling Stones used at Altamont in '69! And I mean that in a "FUKK! That's a SHIT LOAD of BIG BAD ASS amps" way. It's a pleasure seeing the old men in 9ST again, they always deliver the rock'n'roll goods. And they bring our friend and supreme roadie Timmy with them as a bonus. Hurrah! Other bands on the bill are **USV**, **Defacto Oppression** and **Death First**, but I spend most of the evening catching up with old friends. We drive back to Minneapolis straight after the show to prepare for the big Thrash Fest the day after. On our way back the car just dies. Just the thing you want to happen the first day of a six week tour… Eventually it starts again. Keep your fingers crossed.

Sunday 2nd: Starting the day with a smoke, Mountain Dew and Red Bull is always good for your stomach. Me and Andy get up early to help Felix load and drive the stage to the 3rd Lair Skate Park, the site of the **2nd annual Havoc Thrash Fest.** Tom and Jånte spent the night at Brie's, so they get a sleep-in. Bastards! But when we show up at the park, no one is there to open it. The owner is a real flake, and even though Felix has put down a huge down payment on the dump, the guy is still being a dick. Eventually, someone shows up and unlocks the place and things start moving. Me and Andy treat ourselves to a late breakfast at Sewards Café, another cool place that has lots of vegan stuff on the menu. Turns out the singer from Minneapolis band Segue, who we did three shows with in Europe in July, works there. Small word.

The fest starts and everything goes smoothly. 600 kids, tons of records and shit for sale, old friends, new friends, lots of good bands. **Code 13** delivers a pretty good show, even though they are actually broken up and some of the members don't seem all that excited about hardcore anymore. Unfortunately, I miss **Tear It Up** due to a lengthy toilet visit, but the rest of the D.S. guys tell me they were really fukking good. I do catch **Spazm 151**, who we know from the last tour. To be blunt, they are the shit. They fukking rip the place to pieces! A true powerhouse, these Texas fellas don't fukk around. If you don't have their LP on Mind Control – get it NOW! It smokes, believe me. They wave the Texas flag from the stage, which kinda puts me off though. For me, coming from Sweden, flag waving of that kind is only associated with right-wing nationalists and nazi skins. But people close to the band assure me that it's very tongue-in-cheek, and as I get to hang out some more with the members I learn that they are as far from right-wing assholes as you can be. I mean, what nationalist would walk around in a studded cowboy hat, no shirt, wearing a Texas flag as a cape and wielding a dildo, like singer Crazy James does? My point exactly.

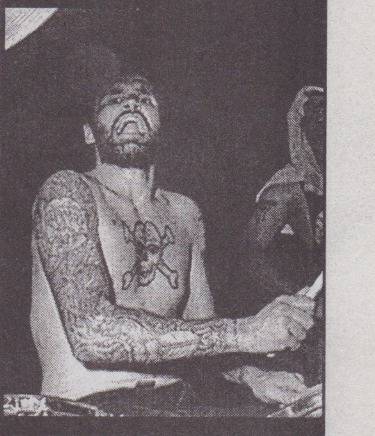
We're on after the Spazm boys, which scares the shit out of me considering how extremely good they were. It turns out to be one of the best D.S.-13 shows we've ever done. The kids are totally psyched, people sing-a-long, mosh and stage-dive like possessed. A really rad show. Me and Tom are also getting warmed up with the in-between song speeches, something that's very hard for us to do as non-English speaking punx. Still it feels better doing it here than in Europe, where you're often just the background to the audience's beer drinking.

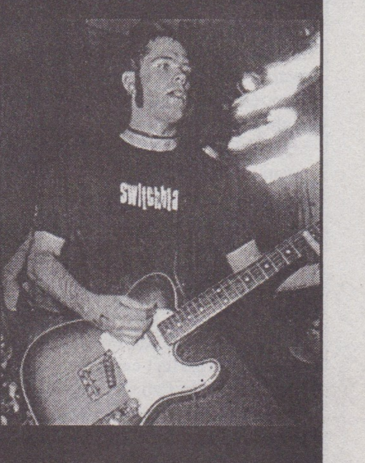
9 Shocks Terror close the fest and chaos erupts. Felix has said no to all the usual fireworks, putting a ban on "everything flammable". This results in friends of the band going out and buying bags of charcoal and flour. Very clever indeed. They discover too late that throwing charcoal is pretty much like throwing rocks. Bass player Tony gets hit right above the eye and blood starts to flow. He jumps into the crowd and starts fighting, and from there it just went downhill. Vocalist Steve jumps into the pit swinging a big bike chain, drummer Wedge stops in the middle of several songs and stands up, screaming at the audience to stop throwing shit. The air is filled with flying charcoal, 7"s, trash – pretty much everything that you can throw. That's the way the kids want it and I guess 9 Shocks encourage it with their "fukk shit up" speeches. Personally I think it's fukking stupid as hell and a band as brilliant as 9 Shocks Terror doesn't need it. Their music is awesome enough, why a gimmick? If I had friends who showed up at our shows throwing rocks at my head, I'd fukking break up the band. Not my enemies, not persons who hate the band – but our fukking friends! It just doesn't make sense. 9 Shocks Terror is the band that could save rock'n'roll if they got their shit together. But if they did, I guess they'd lose their charm huh?

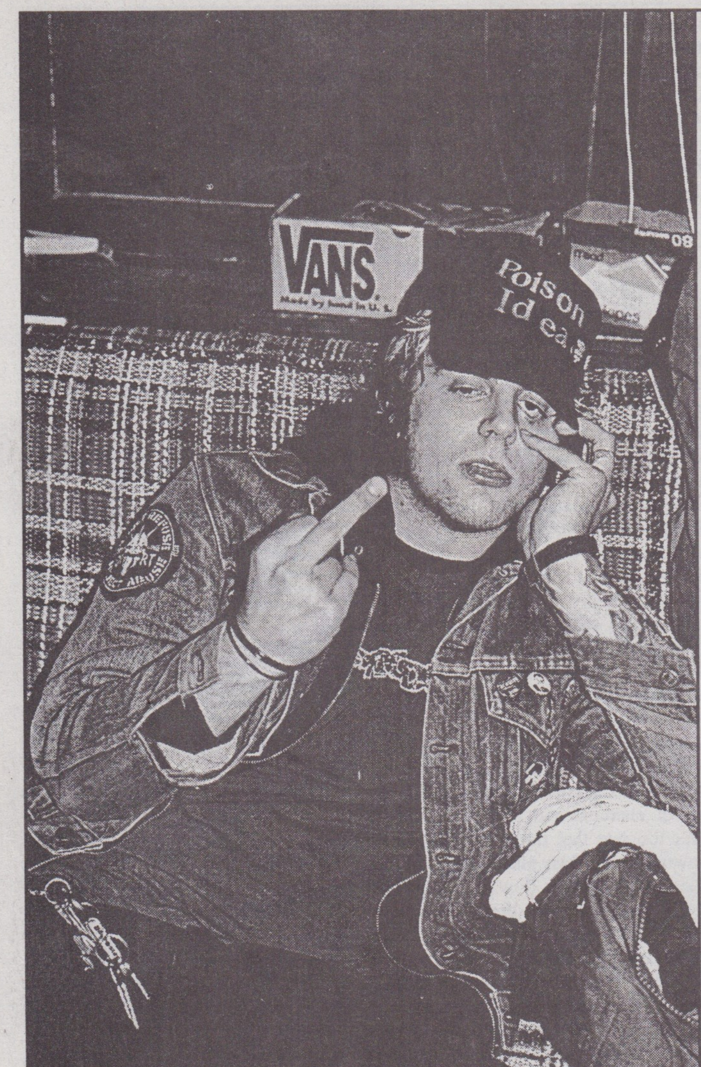
Time flies and before I know it the day is over. Due to a really tight schedule, the whole fest is over by 9. Party and drinking is sacrificed in favour for more pizza at Luce's and bed.

Monday 3rd: The look on Felix face when he discovers that Jånte actually brought a suitcase is priceless. Packing the truck takes forever and we leave Minneapolis 3h too late. We're playing in the worlds smallest basement in **Madison WI**. When you arrive at a party, and you after only ten minutes are informed that one of the girls present "has slept with the bass player of AC/DC", you know that some weird shit is going down. A lot of stoners and heshers looking like members from Testament only add to the peculiar atmosphere. Still a pretty good show, with **Despite** providing some evil grinding and **Definite Choice** thrashin' it up. Ending our stay in Madison with a dose of "Heavy Metal Parking Lot" feels like the correct thing to do. Oh, and thanx for the vodka Ian!

Tuesday 4th: Our show in **Chicago IL**, home of two fukking kick ass D.S.-13 shows last year, is kind of a let down. Not as many people as expected show up and we kinda suck. We don't get the sound right and everything feels sloppy. **Sin Orden** kick ass though, and **USV** (their last show ever) and **Keepin' It Real** are pretty cool too. The venue was awesome! It's just some peoples' apart-







ment, but they have a giant room with skate ramps and that's where we play! Anton from Underestimated Records did the show, and after it's over we go to his place for some delicious food. The rest of the crew stay there to sleep, while I head over to chain smoker #1 Dave Songs house for some drinking. It's a real good time. I hang out on the porch (how American!) with Dave, Kim, Sissie and SF's very own Dirty Paul, and we stay up until five in the morning bullshitting and drinking vodka. We argue whether or not Uncurbed are the gods of käng and make prank calls to MRR's sweetheart editor Mike Thorn.

Wednesday 5th: Fukk,, we should NEVER have recorded "Ready To Fight" by Negative Approach! The kids in **Detroit MI** just won't stop screaming for it! Finally, we cave in and play it. I think we even play it twice, just like last time we played Detroit… Well, you gotta give the kids what they want. It's just bizarre: People in America go see European hardcore bands and scream for American hardcore classics? What the fukk is up with that?! The show was mighty fine though, over 100 kids showed up. **Life. Set. Struggle.**, **Bronson 335** and **Parallax View** played as well. I don't know if it's because of the N.A. covers during the night, but the whole show has some weird kind of moronic skinhead vibe to it. Maybe it's just me. There's almost a fight, when a drunk punk spills some beer on a sxe guy, who proceeds to punch the punker. What a splendid classic scenario! Andy #1, the man behind the show, is a peach and I get to discuss Megadeth with Andy #2 (Ruination/Blodpact).

Thursday 6th: Driving through the streets of **Columbus OH** in the middle of the night, hanging out the windows, screaming along to Mötley Crue's "Shout At The Devil" album and hurling Swedish insults at jocks and college brats provides the perfect ending to any evening. We're all having a blast and I have never ever seen Felix "Stone Face" Havoc laugh as much before. I think that tonight's performance at The Legion Of Doom (w/**Life. Set. Struggle.**, **Killed In Action**, **The Ordeal**, **The Awakening**) was pretty mediocre, but the rest of the band argue that we kicked ass. Guess I'm just being grumpy. After the metal car ride, we end up hanging out for a long time at a pizzeria, where a nice young lady named Amanda gets us discount pizza. And coffee, lots of coffee. She has some damn big'n'black X's tattooed on the top of her hands, but that doesn't stop her from choosing songs on the jukebox together with a drunk like me. We settle for The Clash, Billy Idol, ZZ Top, Guns'N'Roses, Minor Threat, L7 etc and the night ends with good times for all.

Friday 7th: Our show at Mr. Roboto's in **Pittsburgh PA** ends in tragedy. On our way from the venue to the Aus-Rotten mansion, we stop to get some sodas. Some evildoer takes the opportunity to open the back of the truck and run of with Tom's bag! Bastards! The theft isn't discovered until we get to the mansion. We cruise the streets of Pittsburgh, hoping that it just fell out of the car, but it's all in vain. The bag, and pretty much all of Tom's tour clothes are gone. Fukk. Mr. Roboto is one of the coolest punk-run venues we've seen in the states. Awesome that it's still around, keep it up folks! Over 100 kids show up, but still I feel uninspired and really tiered. I get my ass kicked all over the fukking place by thrashers **Crucial Unit** and **Caustic Christ**, a new band with Eric + Corey from Aus-Rotten and Bill Chamberlain from aprox. 1000 different bands. Caustic Christ is really a force to look out for, killer old-school USHC like early C.O.C. Sitting on the porch at the mansion, I realize this is the very same spot that I first met my girlfriend Jessthreat. I get all emo and miss her tons and shit. Me and Corey end up staying on the porch until four in the morning, drinking cheap beer and discussing Venom, bass playing, Black Sabbath and Motörhead.

Saturday 8th: The car dies once again and we end up stranded in the middle of nowhere for two hours. A friendly biker dude helped us by driving to get the parts we need + fixing the engine. We arrive in **Philadelphia PA** really late, and there's already tons of kids hanging out, drinking and mingling. It's a house show at Niki's place. It's fukking rad as hell to see her again! We toured one week with her band Kill The Man Who Questions last year and both bands became very good friends. They are all there: Mike, Beau, Niki, Andrew and Jeremy and it's a fukking pleasure seeing them again, even though Mike thinks that Cradle Of Filth are from Sweden… Unfortunately, we don't get to play with either KTMWQ or Rambo, but the sheer animal magnetism of Mr. Tony Pointless makes up for the loss of live action. **Tear It Up**, **Sound Of Failure** and **Affirmative Action Jackson** fukk shit up pretty good before it's our turn. Halfway through our set, Tom gets a monster assault headache, forcing us to cut the set short. I end up singing both "DIY Or Die" and "Degenerated Generation" by myself. A guy in the crowd claims to know No For An Answer's "Without A Reason", but when push comes to shove, it turns out that he lied. The gig turns out ok in the end and I hope nobody was disappointed. Me and Niki engage in a drinking contest, and end up babbling with Jenny about relationships and Bolt Thrower. But when the conversations turn to role-playing games I'm lost. I ain't no little damn elf! I crash on the couch way too early after way too much drinking. Guess you won huh Niki?

Sunday 9th: Finally get to met my loved one Jessthreat in **West Hartford, CT**. And there was much rejoicing. Kudos to **Diallo**, **Self Defense**, **Tear It Up** and the guy looking like Ayatollah Khomeini for kicking ass. We get to stay with the irresistible Ian in NJ. Instead of looting his mom's bar cabinet like last year, we take on the fridge, cleansing it from everything remotely vegan.

Monday 10th: Fukk, I fukking love **New York, NY**. It's my kinda town. It's a hardcore city, **the** hardcore city in fact, the mother of all urban jungles. The weather gods are doing there best to stop us, hitting us with massive rain floods and lightning from hell. Foolish, they can never stop the invulnerable war machine known as Demon System 13! We're on a quest far more important than our own meaningless lives: We're bringing DIY hardcore to the kids, wherever they may be. Despite the rain coming down in biblical proportions, an impressive number of dedicated followers have gathered at the legendary **ABC-No-Rio.** Youngsters **Down In Flames** do their best but are crippled by a never ending stream of technical failures. **Balance Of Terror** may not say a single word in between songs, but boy, do they shred. A fearsome display of hardcore brutality. I finally get to met Jessthreat's partner in crime, the controversial and misanthropic Jen Hate, known for spewing contempt and death towards humanity in various publications. She kicks ass. The three of us treat ourselves to a fancy dinner at Kate's Joint getting some devastatingly yummy vegan junk food. The tour crew splits up late at night after the show. Me and Jessthreat leave for her hometown Providence, the place of the next gig, while Tom, Jånte, Andy and Felix follow Dave It Up to his fabulous mansion in NJ.

Tuesday 11th: Well, we all fukking know what happens now, don't we? Some international terrorists, high on bullshit religion and self-righteousness, decide to hijack and crash some planes into buildings. Jessthreat's mom calls and wakes us up, and I get to pass the news on to my boys stuck in NJ. They get up right away and start driving to **Providence, RI**, afraid of being delayed by the general melee in the NYC area. What can I say? It's fukked up, totally fukked up. At the same time I am not surprised at all. The US government has been dishing it out all over the world for the past 100 years, and now people are shocked because the chicken has come home to roost?! What the fukk, wake up and smell the coffee! I sure as hell can't defend the Talibans or Bong Laden, but at the same time I sure as hell can't defend George W. Bush II. Like our friend Robert from W.H.N?/Artimus Pyle would later point out, "they both suck". This event will of course affect the rest of our tour. Wherever we come, the punx will ask us what we think, how we feel about it, our perspective as

Europeans etc. At this point I am just glad we left NYC just 8h before the shit went down, otherwise we would have had to cancel a bunch of dates due to being trapped in the city. Felix friend Stuart Arsehole, suggested that if we were to stay over night in NYC, we should go check out the WTC in the morning… Luckily, we chose to leave Monday night after the show. Scary thought, we could've been there.

As I wait for the rest of the System to show up, me and Jessthreat hang out at Armageddon, a splendid little record store in Providence. We're enjoying a smoke on the sidewalk, when a man drives by in a pick-up truck, shouting "fukking towel heads!". Nice.

Despite the terror attacks, the show in Providence turns out to be a fukking blast. 150 kids turn up and there's a general good vibe, feels like people need something else than death and disaster to think about. **What Feed The Fire** turn the hardcore clock back to 1994, they even do an old Bold standard. **Straight To Hell**, Aaron Ulcer from Paindriver's new band, are ok, but have gotten a lot better since then. The grand old men of mangel, **Dropdead**, show us young kids that after ten years in the game they still know how to fukking rock. Before they start, Bob leaves an open mic so people can come up and talk about how they feel about the attacks. Cool. Seeing skinheads at shows always makes me very uncomfortable, especially when they are very big and sporting American flags and SS-patches on their bombers. Two shaved thugs showe up but nobody seemed to mind. They just check out Dropdead and then leave. We close the concert and there's plenty of moshing going on. We even get the old farts standing by the side to smile and bang their fists in the air.

When my mom finally reaches me on the phone she is hysterical. She has our tour schedule and knows that we were in NYC on Monday. I calm her down but she is still worried as fukk that something else is gonna happen. Through out the tour I will continue to get e-mails from worried friends in Sweden.

Wednesday 12th: Forced to leave Jessthreat. It sucks and I start missing her the minute we part ways. Being in the same country, but still being unable to meet is even more frustrating than when she's here and I am in Sweden. Wearing togas at a hardcore show is a bad idea. We're sorry for that in **New Brunswick, NJ**. It was all Felix's fault. Get to spend the night at Castle Greyskull in Philly with the big hunk of love know as Tony Pointless. Awesome.

Thursday 13th: Tony takes us to Mom's in downtown Philly. Their fake meat and cheese subs are so kick-ass it's unbelievable. I'm a bit scared. Not so much for terrorist, the odds for that are like being hit by lightning. But the sudden urge for unity, the overwhelming patriotism, and the racism that floats around beneath the surface in this country is creeping me out. But international terrorism can't stop international DIY hardcore, and neither can all the fukking US flags in the entire country. Fukk it, we continue to tour like nothing has happened. Play in **Baltimore, MD**, with **9 Shocks Terror** and **Strong Intention**. Pretty decent basement show, nothing out of the ordinary. We are once again amazed by American hardcorepunx never ending fascination for collecting toys. Almost everywhere we stay, there's always at least a few action figures of some sort, still in their packaging. If it isn't Spawn, it's Simpson. Blame it on the Star Wars generation I guess.

Friday 14th: Always a pleasure to meet my friend China from **Richmond, VA**. She is cool as hell and is doing the show tonight. On the bill is **Strong Intention, Municipal Waste** and **9 Shocks Terror**. SI, with their fast Infest-core and relentless touring, should be no strangers to readers of this rag. 9ST are fukking amazing, as always, but what else is new? The surprise of the night is Municipal Waste. Fronted by a short'n'intense guy named Tony, these guys pull down my pants and whip my ass bloody. Yupp, they are that good, and they put the fukking metal in thrash. A guy at the show sends chills down my spine. Check it out: This dude is wearing a Ten Yard Fight windbreaker, a "United We Stand" star spangled t-shirt and am American flag tied around his arm. Wow… I understand that this country has been hurt, but hardcore kids embracing patriotism and flag waving smells so fukking bad. I piss on their flag, I piss on the Swedish flag, I fukking piss on all fukking flags. "Red white and blue is all that you see/But does it mean you're really free/I want total liberty/I want peace and anarchy" (Reagan Youth). No borders, no governments, no state control – ANARCHY! Sorry, got a bit carried away there. But seriously, this country is fukked. Flags to the right, flags to the left, slogans everywhere, people talking about exterminating Arabs on the radio… The mighty fortress America has been penetrated and now we have to bomb someone! After the gig is over, Erik from Alabama Thunderpussy takes me to Hole In The Wall and treats me to whiskey shots and beer. Wonderful! We discuss music, politics, love and what have you. He's an awesome dude, and I hope I get to hang out with him and his lovely wife Chris from Slug And Lettuce zine soon again. We move on to China's place, where we are met by the sight of Steve from 9 Shocks Terror passed out in the hallway. She has since been evicted… We look at old Venom videos and bullshit. Me and the rest of the DS guys joke about the name Alabama Thunderpussy, what it would be like if we started a band named the same thing in Swedish. I am sure Umeå Åskfitta would go down in a storm…

Saturday 15th: The Thrash Bash 2001 in **Greenville, NC**, turns out to be not that a big of a fest. Only like 60 paying people show up for Saturday, but since there's about 4 000 bands on the bill, there's still plenty of kids in the audience. We arrive way to early and have nothing to do. The venue is a really shabby indoor skate park and there's really no place to relax and hang out. I end up chillin' a lot with Andy from **Tear It Up** and Ryan from **Municipal Waste**. Both those bands put on amazing sets at the fest, some of the best hardcore I've seen in quite some time. All of you probably have 200 Tear It Up records by now, but I urge you to check out the Municipal Waste 7". Is fukking shreds. Unfortunately, I miss **Down In Flames** for the stupid reason of drinking beer with Ryan. A really drunk punk girl joins our little gathering at the bar, she starts talking with the most extreme southern accent I have ever heard outside of the movies. After she leaves, the guy that she talked the most to tells the rest of us that she confessed to having HIV. What a fukking rotten shit world this is. Our gig is crazy. Everybody who's at the fest is in the room, slamming and moshing like they are fukking possessed. If you ask me we sound like shit but it doesn't seem to matter. The highlight is when I get up on the bass drum to jump during "State Oppression", and swiftly proceed to fall ass over the drum set. I tear down half the set, rip my favorite pants and manage to bend one of the massive cymbal stands. I now have the scars to prove that I am hardcore, one on my back and one on the back of my thigh. People go even more nuts after that. Which proves my theory: You can sound fukking awful, bus as soon as you start breaking shit or hurting someone, the kids go bananas. But nothing can top **9 Shocks Terror**, who close the fest. The room is entirely filled with smoke, firecrackers going off, trash cans and small plants flying through the air, Andy catches on fire… Insane I tells ya! In the middle of the chaos, the owner of the skate parks shows up and fires the manager, who has booked the fest! Apparently, all the smoke has gone up into the skate shop that's above the park, damaging all the goods. Luckily the cops don't show up, guess they are busy elsewhere. Greenville is a small college town and there's tons of scantly clad girls and stupid frat boys out on the streets, drinking and partying. After the chaos has settled, we say bye to all our friends in Tear It Up, Strong Intention, Municipal Waste, Down In Flames and 9 Shocks Terror and move on.

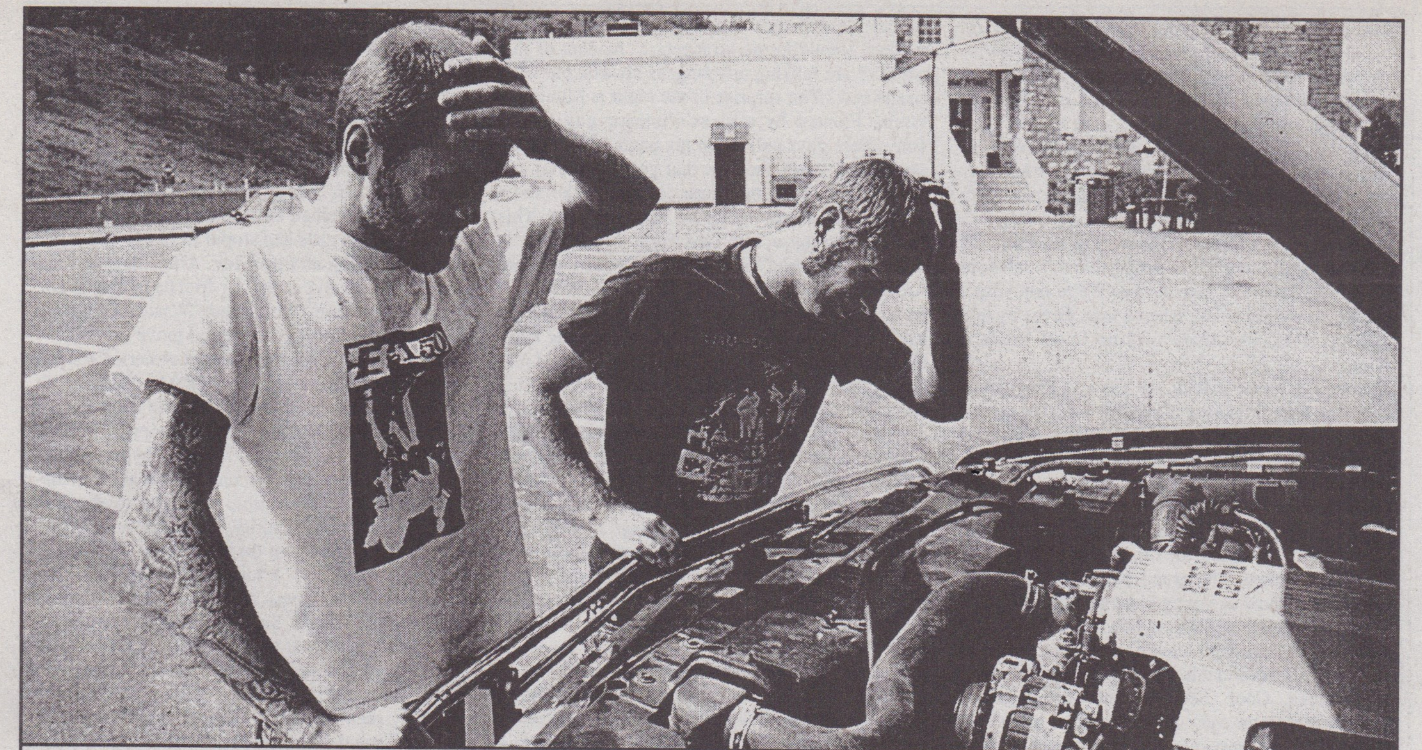
Sunday 16th: Cruising through America's south with Roky Erickson's "Night Of The Vampire" in my headphones. Even though the sun is up and it's hotter than hell, the tune seems appropriate. This is the land of blood suckers, demons, hyper capitalists, warmongers, patriots, nationalists and just assholes in general. The people here seem so obsessed by their own power, purity, whiteness and perfection as they race down the highway in their fancy new cars. And still, I fukking love this country. Don't know why, guess it's because the kids are so nice. We play at the Subvert house in **Savannah, GA**. You can tell that we didn't do any shows at all in the south last year. Nobody knows us here and there's no moshing or singing along whatsoever. But they seem to like us at least. **Karst**, which is the ex-Damad band, goes down a storm. That heavy, evil metalcore type stuff seems to be more popular in general here in the south. Victoria has an awesome voice and she turns out to be a really nice person too. I hang out some with her and the drummer, Scott, who tells me old stories from when he used to be in Antischism.

Monday 17th: Well, **Gainesville, FL**, is not gonna go down in history as the best D.S.-13 show ever. Barely anyone has bothered to show up at Full Circle, a bar/club kinda place. It's just a general weird vibe. Jessthreat's cousin Matt, who I've never met before, shows up and hangs out for a while. I talk a lot to Pete from the British band Scalplock, a very nice and cool bloke. He also used to be in the very underrated Harmony As One. We discuss the possibilities of doing some kind of project together with Andy from the Swedish Victims. We'll see if that ever happens. Spend the night at Matt from Asshole Parade's place, one of the cleanest, nicest and freshest homes we will encounter during this tour. Thanx mate!

Tuesday 18th: Play at Sound Idea in **Brandon, FL**. Cool show. The backroom was packed with kids moshing and having fun. We tried doing "Buy The Scene", that song never ever works out.

Wednesday 19th: The show in **Atlanta, GA**, is at some kind of warehouse complex that's been converted into living quarters. Pretty nice. **9 Shocks Terror** get pissed off that people aren't going nuts, destroying stuff , shooting off firecrackers etc when they play. Guess you can't win them all. **Books Lie** and **Leechmilk** play as well, they're both pretty decent.

Thursday 20th: When we get to **Murfreesboro, TN**, we finally manage to solve Jånte's amp problem. Throughout the tour, we've been haunted by his guitar never being loud enough. When you play mostly basement shows, where the instruments very rarely are put through the PA, a big bad ass amp is a necessity. In Murfreesboro we find a good 100 W amp for a decent price. Sugar daddy Von Havoc takes out his wallet and the deed is done. The show is at a café/restaurant named Red Rose, where they provide us with a smashing vegan chili and an outdoor stage. Playing outside feels strange, but there's a good crowd, over 100 paying. Unfortunately, we're not the draw. Most have come to see **Asschapel**, a local grind band that



seems to have a big following. When we play people are kinda stiff and reserved but it looks like they're into our shit. I am glad we didn't have to play after Asschapel. Unlike most grind bands, they sacrifice being tight and good musically on the altar of rocking out. Never seen a metal band move around so much on stage! They go fukking crazy and the crowd digs it. A guy at the show is wearing an anti-gay Meat Shits t-shirt that says "Homosexual Slaughter"… Fukked up dude. Felix wants to fight him but it all amounts to nothing. Spend the night at Dave from From Ashes Rise, where we get more tasty food. I live to eat.

Friday 21st: I turn 24 today. Big deal. Today is one of those shows that you live for. You know, when you have no expectations and expect everything to suck, and life proves you wrong and everything turns out to be kick-ass. The place is Tree Of Woe in **MemphisTN**, there's only like 40-50 people but everybody is sooo psyched over the fact that a European band has bothered to play there town. Everybody in Nashville told us in advance that Memphis would suck ass, but they couldn't have been more wrong. Fukk man, it's days like this that I fukking live and breath for DIY hardcore! Memphis rocks! We play with **People's War** (7" out on Dutch label Coalition, check it out) and **(Who Is) Keyser Soze** (something as unusual as a quality power violence band), all really nice and cool people. The drummer of People's War and his lady friend told me that they think that D.S.-13's lyrics are really good and have inspired them a lot. Shit like that means a lot to us, almost brought a tear to my eye. I hope to visit Memphis again someday. We leave straight after show, going to Shreveport.

Saturday 22nd: Arrive in **Shreveport, LA**, at Chris' house at half past six in the morning. We sleep for a few hours before it's time to go to the show, a live radio show broadcasted on KSCL. I guess you'd call it a college station. Definitely a new experience for us. About 20 kids show up (apparently the most amount of people they've ever had at KSCL) and squeeze themselves into the small radio room. We run through 16 safe numbers, pack up our shit and leave for **Dallas, TX**, for the evening gig. This one turns out to be total madness and one of the best gigs of the tour. Most definitely the best one in the south. It's at Brad from Spazm 151's (one of the best bands in the states right now, check 'em out) house and a lot of kids have come out tonight. Crusties, sxe, chaos punx, Mohawks, hardcore kids – beautiful! Also on the bill are **League Of Struggle**, **Nuclear Addicts** and **Face Down In Shit**, all cool bands worthy of your support. I introduce our set by saying "Tonight is my birthday, so let's make it a memorable night. Let's fukk it up Texas style!". A lie and total ass kissing, I know, but it works and after that we have the crowd eating from our hands. Everybody goes ape shit, the beer starts flying through the air and I am surprised that Brad's house is still there. Total chaos ensues! It's sweet meeting Brad and Gary from Spazm 151 again, plus the League Of Struggle guys, who we've encountered various times during this tour, are really nice too. Dig that helmet dude! I end up hanging out with these two guys Ben and Jason till eight in the morning, drinking and talking about the usual stuff. Especially me and Jason hit it off really well, and we discuss music, politics, feminism, growing up and what have you. It turns out that he actually was at the Doughnuts (friends of us from our home town) show in the states back in '94, where a guy got stabbed to death. Crazy. Later during the night, or should I say early as hell in the morning, this nazi dude shows up and starts hanging out. He seems like just another punk, but after a while I start noticing his very shady tattoo's, and while talking to Ben this guys starts denying the holocaust and shit. Nobody seems to mind though, and just keep on discussing with him instead of throwing him out. I don't get it so I go to bed. Before we leave in the morning the nazi guy offers to do a show for us the next time we pass through Dallas. It will be "much bigger". Thanx.

Sunday 23rd: What a lousy fukking shit day. We drive one hour in the wrong direction to go to the Houston Space Center, only to find that it's closed due to terror alert! The only part open is $15! Only Felix pays to get in, I end up wasting $7 on two stinking postcards at the gift shop. And then Felix crashes into another car, he rams this women from behind! She turns out to be cool though, and they decide to settle this without insurance companies. Shit happens. The venue in **Houston, TX** is fukking rad as hell. It's this old 50's department store that's been converted into some kind of artsy café and gig place. Most of the old stuff from the 50's is still there. We play on the second floor, surrounded by old women's shoes and various other debris! Good show, the kids are excited, maybe a bit to excited. There's some pretty rough moves on the dance floor and severe macho tendencies. Tom kicks a guy right in the stomach after getting hit in the face. Both me and him are pissed of at some jerks in the crowd and are not that psyched about doing any encores. But Andy and Jånte wanna do it, so we end up doing two, three extra songs after all. Sell-outs. At least the guy doing the show, Chucky, is really nice. Driving out of Houston gives me a surreal feeling, like I was in the movie "Akira". The skyscrapers, the neon and the darkness is all very beautiful as we drive on twisted roads in the air. We stay with Bobby, who lives in the middle of nowhere with only his girlfriend in this absolutely gigantic luxury mansion. We eat, wash and shower.

Monday 24th: Jack Control from Severed Head Of State/Mind Control Rec's is nice enough to cook yummy food and book a show for us in **Austin, TX**. It's at this bar called Black Cat. Our set feels kinda standard but people seem to appreciate it. We get to hang out with Texas James from Spazm 151. He's fukking weird but a real gem. After the show there's a jaded after party at Jack's weird hippie space house. The highlight is when Jånte tricks James into eating these extremely strong pepper fruits. He almost passes out. Me, Andy and Tom end up falling asleep sitting up.

Tuesday 25th: Second flat tire on this tour. Drive all day, sleep at a motel. The deadly desert is beautiful, it just never ends. It looks empty of everything Unbelievable. The sheer size of this country frightens me.

Wednesday 26th: Playing **Phoenix, AZ,** has to be one of the weirdest things we've ever done. The venue is called The Hollywood Alley, it's a bar and has a big American flag over the door. There's an age limit (only non all-ages show we've ever done!) and an old-men blues cover band opening up… I think we suck, but the few kids who are there (mostly the opening act **Wasteoid** from Nebraska) think that we rock hard and ride free. We're simply not used to these kinda situations. Well, at least we got some raging vegan burgers. Awesome, I'm getting sick of eating burritos all the time.

Thursday 27th: Starting to get really sick, but it doesn't matter. The show at

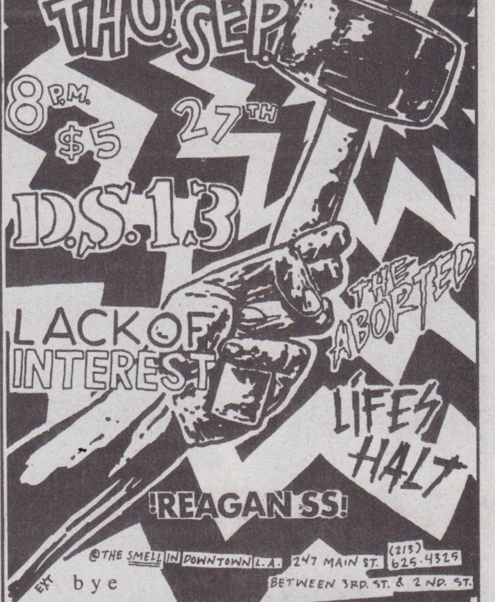
The Smell in **Los Angeles, CA**, is fukking magic and will stay with me forever. It's a huge show, with 300 kids and **Life's Halt, Reagan SS, Lack Of Interest, The Aborted** and **Wastoid** joining the bill. We close the spectacle, this one is sure to be a classic. I'm not that satisfied with my own effort, I feel like shit, have a headache and mostly stand still. It doesn't matter though. The people in the audience have enough energy for everyone and are tearing the place to pieces. It's like a wall of kids up front, two persons high, and people stage diving non-stop. It feels like old Black Flag videos from '81! People are everywhere, there's barely any room for us on the stage! Crusties, hardcore kids, sxe and what have you all coming together in unity. Beautiful. It's always nice meeting old friends from home when you are on the road, so when Josie and Ullis from Umeå show up at the Smell I am fukking thrilled. Josie will always have a special place in my heart, plus it's cool that she finally got to see a good D.S.-13 show… Brian from Grand Theft Audio is one of the nuttiest scenesters I have ever met, but it's still rad to seem him again. Same goes for Matt Average (who does an interview for Short, Fast & Loud), Albert/Know Rec's, Gen/Ruido and of course the entire Life's Halt camp. When everything's over, we suddenly find ourselves all alone outside The Smell. The place is all locked, all the kids have gone home, it's in the middle of the night, we're in a very dark alley in downtown LA… Since Felix is carrying an awful lot of merch cash, he gets nervous and we load up fast as hell and get the fukk outta Dodge. We stay with the singer Ernie and his wife Rebecca, they're just two big ol' sweethearts.

Friday 28th: Still sick. Didn't have that much energy for the gig in at Che Café in **San Diego, CA**, but it still turned out to be a good night. **Life's Halt** destroyed and **Run For Your Fucking Life** put on a good set as well. Got to meet a lot of nice people, like Spencer who fixed the show + sings in the opening band **Find Him And Kill Him**. And two of the guys who used to play in The Neighbors. It's shit that they broke up just before we came to San Diego, I'd love to play with them. Mark from The Oath shows up like an unexpected but pleasant surprise, he looks all nice and shit with a preppy hair cut and turtleneck sweater. During our tour, he has had time to tour Europe, and when they played Umeå he stayed at my apartment without me being there. The DIY world works in mysterious ways. We drive back to LA and stay with the worlds loveliest punkrock couple, Ernie and Rebecca, once again.

Saturday 29th: Finally I get to meet Americas biggest sweetheart, Mr. Mike Thorn, the one of the bosses at MRR and the man I want to give birth to my children. Our return to the legendary Gilman St. in **Berekeley, CA**, turns out to be way, way better than last time. Over 300 kids go crazy and **Life's Halt** does yet another brilliant show. I am so glad we got to play with them before they broke up. Our set goes really good as well, and Gilman is definitely one of the highlights of the entire tour. There's moshing galore going down in the pit, and as we play Ernie tries to drag me into the crowd by pulling my legs. Also on the bill are **Beware, Blown To Bits** and **STFU**. I finally get to met Jeff + Athena from Six Weeks, plus Dirty Paul, Max Ward, Arwen, Sissi and Dave Song are there too. Tons of good hanging out and we get to spend the night at the MRR house.

Sunday 30th: We're informed that the show at Burnt Ramen in **Richmond, CA**, is a matinee, so we arrive at half past four, just to be told that the everything starts at seven. Well, just more leisure time to hang out with Max, Dirty Dave, Mike, Tobia and the rest of the crew. It's a small show together with **Beware, Scholastic Death** and **Wastoid**. No crowd action at all tonight, but we still have fun. When we're done, we find out that they've recorded our set and we get a CD-r. Hurrah!

Monday 1st of October: Changing of the months and it feels like we've been on the road forever. Like there's nothing outside D.S.-13 and hardcore. Still at the MRR house, checking out Reagan Youth videos. Tom is totally crashed out, sick as hell. And I'm starting to cough more and more. We leave late for the gig at The Loft in **Sacramento, CA**. Opening up are **Vöetsek**, Tobia and Athena's new band doing their first gig. My suspicions of a disaster show turns out to be false. Good amount of kids and action in the pit when we play, but after four songs we have to stop because of the cops. There's four police cars outside, apparently they are searching for some graffiti people who've just spray painted something. The cops check everybody's hands for paint before we're let back inside. We go on stage and kick right into "Fukk The Cops". Magic. After that there's a sad parting with the SF crew before we drive to Amy from Vöetsek's house to sleep.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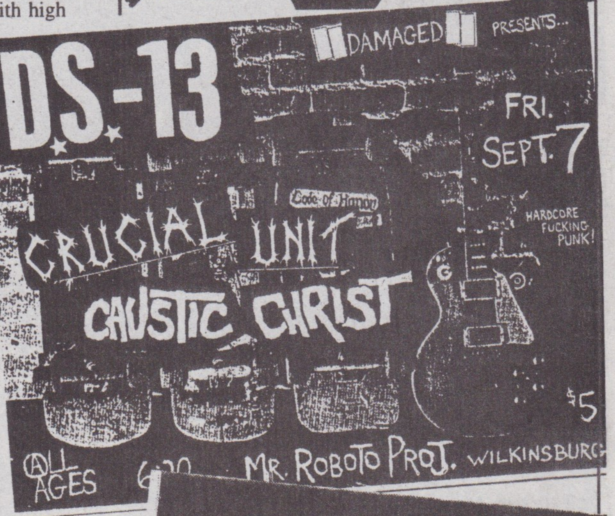
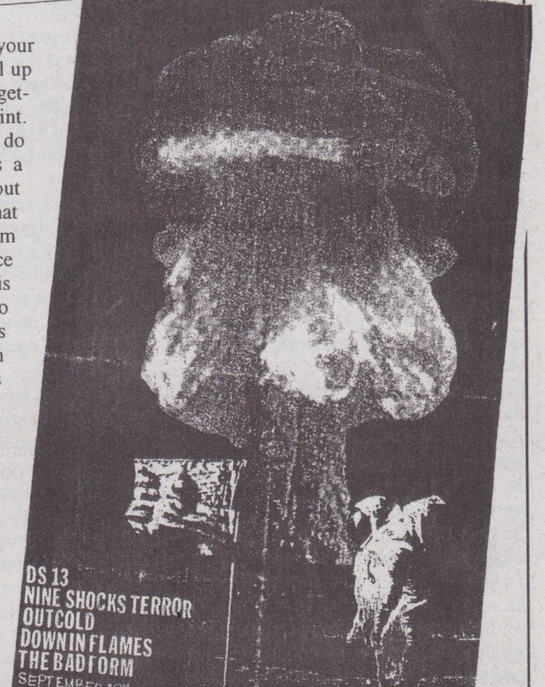
Tuesday 2nd: Tom is really sick with high fever and throat pain. I don't feel that good either. The show in **Reno, CA**, is horrible. The PA isn't working at all, so we do a short and intense instrumental set in front of a basement filled with Hot Topic punx. Tom is a trooper even though he's so sick, shouting the lyrics without a mic and punching the punx up front. Also on the bill are **Iron Lung, Wastoid** and **Crucial Attack** (Really good, total '81 attack!). The only really good thing about Reno is that we finally get to hang out with our friends Karoline and Robert from W.H.N?/Artimus Pyle. They kick ass. Karoline, suspecting that we'd all be sick, has brought her herbal stuff and we all get a good dose of remedies.



Wednesday 3rd: Today one of those rare events occurred, when you get your ass kicked without any expectations. We pull up to the venue in **Chico, CA**, pretty late after getting some delicious vegan crub at a local joint. The first band has already started. And boy, do they fukking blow us away or what?! It's a young teenage band called **Gruk**, dishing out some supreme hardcorepunk. Felix says that they've stolen pretty much everything from Blatz and Filth, but I don't really care since I've never been into those bands. Gruk is fronted by an awesome female singer, who combines a lot of attitude and drunken chaos to form a killer front woman. They end with a bodacious rendition of Danzig's "Mother"… We do our set a three piece, Tom is too sick to sing. I sing a bunch of songs, then Felix joins for our covers of No For An Answer, Sick Of It All and Negative Approach. All of a sudden Ryan, the guitar player from Gruk, jumps on the stage and takes over the mic for "Get Away", "Fukk The Cops" and "Can't Watch It". Really fukking cool! Tom wakes up and we finish with "Thrash Lifestyle" and "D.S.-13" with him on vocals. There's a decent crowd, not that many but the kids there are really hyper. I get the feeling that there's mostly mall punx there, but maybe we managed to convert a few to the faith of DIY hardcore. We say good-



to Robert and Karoline, it's a shame that they got to see the two weirdest/worst shows on the tour. We spend the night at Victoria's place, an older punk lady who's kind enough to give us food and beds. Thanx!

Thursday 4th: Terrible show in **Talent, OR**. Horrible PA, garage show, tons of stoners wanting to trade weed for t-shirts and got paid $16. Tom's still sick, so we had to do it as a three piece again, even though I'm fukking sick to. I'd rather just forget this show.

Friday 5th: Same basement in **Portland, OR,** as last year. More people though and **Atrocious Madness** opening up instead of Tragedy. Portland is strange… Such a big scene, so many people, everybody's moving there but no real venues. Still, I get to hang out with my friend Michelle, which is way cool. After the gig, which ends really early, me and Felix and my old friend Mari (a Swedish noise kid in exile) go to some kind of house party, where spikey punx are mixed with more stylish kids. We all spend the night at Mari's place.

Saturday 6th: Same venue in **Seattle, WA**, as last year. New kids though, about a hundred of them. The place is called The Paradox and is a really cool old cinema. Our set is going good, really good in fact, and everybody gets down. But halfway through, some assholes decide to fight it out up front, and the owner threatens to end the show. Actually, this is the first time ever that we've had an actual fight at one of our gigs. We get to finish our set with all the lights on, but we kinda lose the good vibes that were going on before the break. Opening act **Spitting Teeth** are ok, I think I would appreciate it more if I wasn't so fukking sick. Later, when I get home to Sweden and get to listen to their 7" I am blown away. Killer thrash baby. The night ends at the Spitting Teeth's guys house, were everybody is laughing their asses of watching the thug movie "New York Hardcore". Zanne from Rehash zine is there hanging out, and Steve entertains us with stories about the meth house next door and the christian sorority girls in the apartment above. Steve and the Spitting Teeth's fellas house is sweet. It's nice staying with punx who don't think that having poop on the floor and fly's everywhere is the ultimate punk dream.

Sunday 7th: I am so fukking fed up and want to go home. I am sick as hell and feel like shit, that's actually the only reason I wanna go home. Otherwise I could go on forever. Everybody's sick, except Felix, and longing for warm beds and home. Even Andy, who's encouraging words when the going gets tough is "Well, it's better than home", is homesick. I've been coughing and sneezing for over a week and it's really taking the edge out of me. Our show in **Spokane, WA**, is a total hit-and-run deal. We spend less than 3h at the house we're playing. When we arrive I am close to breakdown, I just want to either kill someone or lay myself down on the floor and cry. There's a lot of people there, cute kids, clean metalheads and Relapse grinders. But I just don't care about talking to anyone. We do a really short set, like 13 songs in 13 minutes. The crowd seems to be into it, and some sort of pit is formed. Too bad that I'm beyond reach, I just want to kill and pillage. Hate everyone, want to cry. We pack the fukk up and drive to a motel for sleep.

Monday 8th: Show in **Salt Lake City, UT**, cancelled. First time in the history of the band. But I couldn't care less. It's such a relief having a night off. The promoter Dave gives us food and somewhere to stay. We watch "Happiness", a splendid movie that at least made me hate my own life less. After coughing my lungs to smithereens for hours, I finally fall asleep. It's getting harder and harder to tell the difference between dreams and reality. I wake up all the time, sleep really bad. I awake to incredible thunder claps and pouring rain. When we get up in the morning it's snowing. I hate snow. I hate to be cold. I hate being sick.

Tuesday 9th: Yet another cock-in-the-arse day. My throat feels like someone is cutting it with razors when I swallow or talk. The gig is at an auto repair shop in **Denver, CO,** in the middle of an industrial area. It's fukking freezing cold, there's nowhere to hang out and about 1,000 bands on the bill. The day just never ends. I wish I was able to enjoy the other acts (**Catheter**, **Scott Baio Army** + more) and our own set. Because it is a fukking supreme, raging set. The place is packed and as soon as we start the first song bodies start flying. The kids are down with the Swedish hardcore beat and can't get enough. They are literary moshing in the drum set! I, on the other hand, am wearing all the clothes I have with me and am standing absolutely still. I hate everyone in the room, the room itself and the country where it has been built. Sorry, I'm just in a terrible mood. With everyone in the band being sick, tension is running high and we snap at each other's throats for nothing. The bass player of Scott Baio Army and his wonderful wife show mercy and take us in for the night. They have a small but really cozy apartment that, for a change, isn't freezing. In the morning, their cute little dogs take turns dancing on Tom's face. After that, the mrs. feeds us tea with honey, vitamins and tasty bagels. Just what we need. Thanx a bunch!

Wednesday 10th: Felix starts the day by driving the wrong way and we lose one and a half hours. To top it off, we get our third flat tire on this tour. Fukking hell. We arrive in **Lawrence, KS,** really late and all the other bands have already played. Within an hour we've loaded in, set up and finished playing in front of a good amount of kids. But we're so tired, oh so fukking sick and tired. The set is short and unexciting. We've had enough. When we get back to Mike's place, the guy doing the show, I call and cancel the last show on the tour. We're sorry **Iowa**, but we couldn't take anymore. We are all simply to sick. I can barely stay awake and feel like someone is slowly running me over with a tank. For the first time in our history, we've cancelled a gig. Still, with two shows canceled we end up with a total of 40 concerts in six weeks. Still pretty good eh?

Friday 12th: Back in Minneapolis, at the airport. Home sweet home.

Conclusion of the tour: Hardcore still lives. Thanx to everyone who helped, especially Felix Von Havoc.

Contact: Box 275, 901 06 Umeå, Sweden. www.ds13.com

LIFE SET STRUGGLE

Life Set Struggle are a Toledo-based, no-bullshit, stripped-down thrash unit that brings to mind bands like early Black Flag, early Circle Jerks, Negative Approach, and even a bit of Token Entry, or any number of classic skate bands only cranked to ten and with all four wheels blazing. If any band were to lead a skate-fueled hardcore renaissance (to borrow from Felix's column) they are it. Never mind the bands posing with their decks and fashion gear, here's Life Set Struggle. For the kids! By the kids! Interview done over email due to distance and schedules by Tony four tee gee.

MRR: So as a starting point I assume a bit of the origins of the band and membership would be a good start for the uninitiated. How'd it all come together, and how the hell do you have three-quarters of the band in Toledo and a vocalist in Ann Arbor?

Stimp: This is kinda of tough because there have been many starts to this band, but I'll spare you all the boring stuff! Graham and I wanted to start a band similar to early Black Flag/Negative Approach. We felt Toledo didn't have a traditional fast punk hardcore band. Many singers and bassists later we found Sikander through this kid Alex from Coalition and Derek, who has been my best friend forever, so he was down from the beginning to play bass.

MRR: Now Stimp used to be in Varsity, a posi sXe band from the Detroit area, and I know I have seen Life Set Struggle listed as ex-Varsity more than once. Seeing as the bands share little of the same sound and only one ex-member, do you feel this to be a hindrance? And also did you feel you had shoes to fill when you started seeing as the band was such an influential part of the scene here?

Stimp: As far a Varsity went, we had fun and the band just kinda came to a standstill with the drummer situation. I don't feel being labeled ex-Varsity is a hindrance, but I think labeling bands ex-anything is lame because you're riding off your previous band, and the new project might not have anything to do with what your old band did. As far as filling any shoes, I didn't have any feelings like I had to. I could tell some people were kinda of bummed when they heard us and we sounded nothing like Varsity. Oh well you know, what can I do? We still play fast hardcore punk, but I guess you can't please them all! Varsity is a separate entity from Life Set Struggle and if you want to associate us together, fine; if you don't, fine, we are here to play the music we like and skate, so if you're not down with either one, get the fuck out of our way.

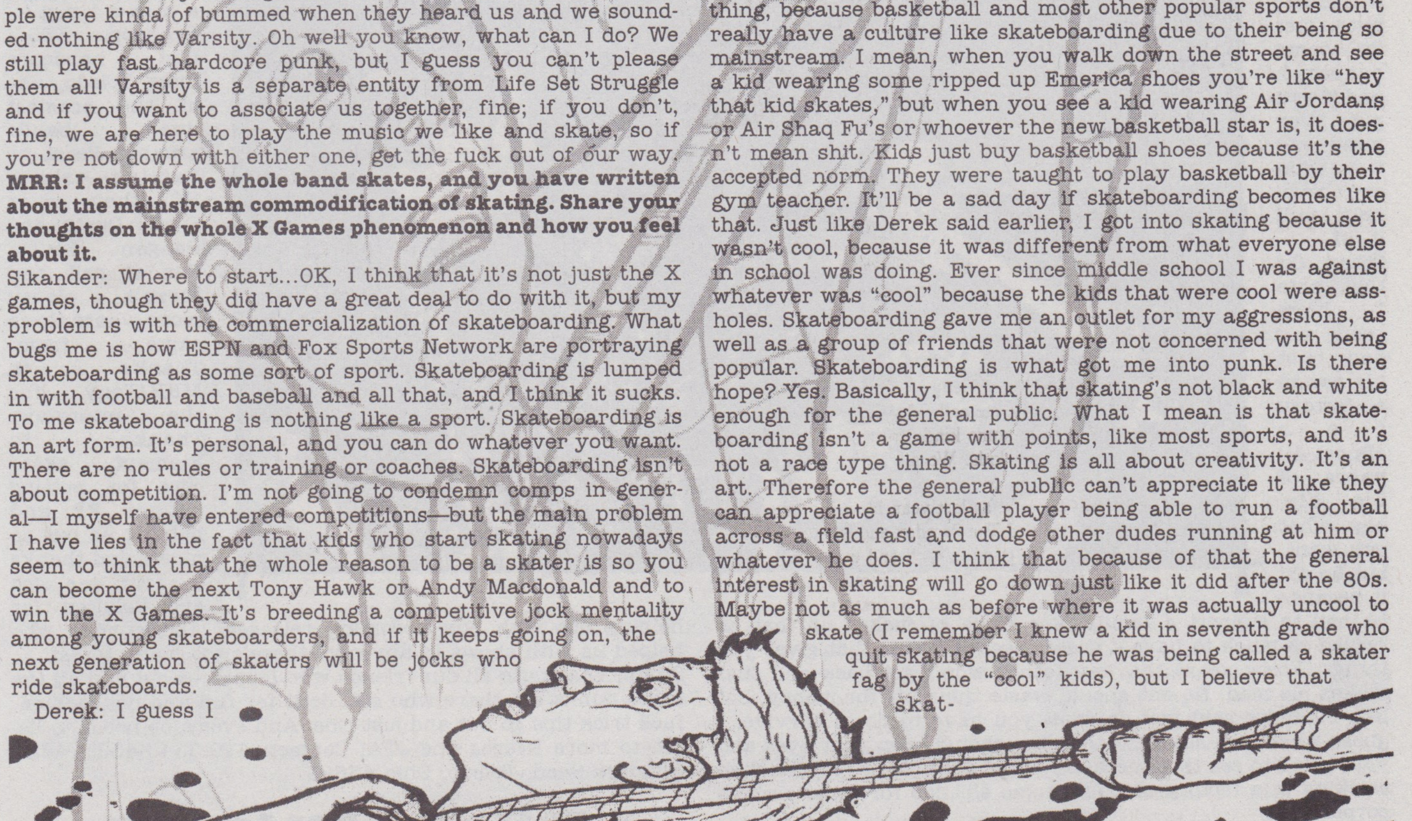
MRR: I assume the whole band skates, and you have written about the mainstream commodification of skating. Share your thoughts on the whole X Games phenomenon and how you feel about it.

Sikander: Where to start...OK, I think that it's not just the X games, though they did have a great deal to do with it, but my problem is with the commercialization of skateboarding. What bugs me is how ESPN and Fox Sports Network are portraying skateboarding as some sort of sport. Skateboarding is lumped in with football and baseball and all that, and I think it sucks. To me skateboarding is nothing like a sport. Skateboarding is an art form. It's personal, and you can do whatever you want. There are no rules or training or coaches. Skateboarding isn't about competition. I'm not going to condemn comps in general—I myself have entered competitions—but the main problem I have lies in the fact that kids who start skating nowadays seem to think that the whole reason to be a skater is so you can become the next Tony Hawk or Andy Macdonald and to win the X Games. It's breeding a competitive jock mentality among young skateboarders, and if it keeps going on, the next generation of skaters will be jocks who ride skateboards.

Derek: I guess I got into skateboarding because it just wasn't cool. I don't worry about the whole X Games thing. I think that there will always be two kinds of skateboarders; the skateboarder who truly cares and the ones who are just doing it as a fad. And in the end when skateboarding isn't cool, you will still have us.

MRR: Adding onto that, do you feel that skating's punk soul and rebel attitude is being watered down by this? As you guys can recall, there was a time when skating and punk/hardcore went hand in hand. Is there hope?

Sikander: In response to the first question, yeah, somewhat. I mean, skateboarding has always been sort of a punk thing to do because most people don't understand skateboarding, and they just see you wrecking the benches and ledges and hurting yourself. Nowadays with it getting popularized, more and more cities are building skateparks in an effort to make skateboarding some legitimate sport and get kids off the streets. I've seen a lot of half-assed parks that were built just so the city can say "you have a place to skate, so now you have no excuse to skate street and we can give you ridiculous fines for riding that thing anywhere in our city." I don't even like skating parks half as much as I like skating street, so this kind of stuff pisses me off. Sorry, I'm getting off the question here. Back to the rebel attitude and whatnot, I think that skateboarding's grown so much that you can't expect skate culture to have any one single image anymore...where in the 80s you had a skateboarder/punk, nowadays there's many different types of sub-groups within skateboarding. Go to your local skatepark and you'll see some kids wearing baggy parachute warmup pants and Ecko unlimited gear, trying to do switch hardflip nose grinds or some tech trick on the box, and on the other side of the park you'll see some long hair with a Maiden shirt on trying to ollie off something ridiculously high...and those are just two exaggerated examples. I actually think that this is somewhat of a good thing, more diversity in skating, but I don't want it to become so big where it's a normal thing to do like basketball or something, because basketball and most other popular sports don't really have a culture like skateboarding due to their being so mainstream. I mean, when you walk down the street and see a kid wearing some ripped up Emerica shoes you're like "hey that kid skates," but when you see a kid wearing Air Jordans or Air Shaq Fu's or whoever the new basketball star is, it doesn't mean shit. Kids just buy basketball shoes because it's the accepted norm. They were taught to play basketball by their gym teacher. It'll be a sad day if skateboarding becomes like that. Just like Derek said earlier, I got into skating because it wasn't cool, because it was different from what everyone else in school was doing. Ever since middle school I was against whatever was "cool" because the kids that were cool were assholes. Skateboarding gave me an outlet for my aggressions, as well as a group of friends that were not concerned with being popular. Skateboarding is what got me into punk. Is there hope? Yes. Basically, I think that skating's not black and white enough for the general public. What I mean is that skateboarding isn't a game with points, like most sports, and it's not a race type thing. Skating is all about creativity. It's an art. Therefore the general public can't appreciate it like they can appreciate a football player being able to run a football across a field fast and dodge other dudes running at him or whatever he does. I think that because of that the general interest in skating will go down just like it did after the 80s. Maybe not as much as before where it was actually uncool to skate (I remember I knew a kid in seventh grade who quit skating because he was being called a skater fag by the "cool" kids), but I believe that skat-



LIFE SET STRUGGLE

ing's insane popularity will drop considerably in the near future. It's cyclical, as soon as the cool kids decide that Hawk clothing isn't cool anymore and Jackass is as forgotten as Beavis and Butthead, that's when skateboarding will have its culture back from the greedy claws of the mainstream media.

MRR: Another popular topic for the band is work and being tied to a job you hate. What are your feelings on it? Is the band advocating an anti-work attitude as a whole or do you feel there can be a middle ground between working and living your life?

Sikander: I personally haven't really had any jobs I've liked. I've had easy jobs that I've started out liking, but I've always gotten to a point where I feel like killing myself while driving to work because I don't want to go. That's why I'm going to college, so I can facilitate getting a job that I enjoy. We as a band, on the other hand, do not all feel the same way. I know Graham doesn't. I'm pretty sure though, that we all agree on the idea that letting your work take over your life and tie you down is not a good thing. Our songs are about remembering that you do have a say in your life. I feel bad for people who do the same thing every day, and then maybe two weeks out of the year they have fun. I mean it's no surprise that people go into their work at the post office and kill everyone and themselves. Imagine going in there everyday and dealing with people, while your life passes you by, that shit would drive me nuts too. As far as an anti-work attitude, we don't have one at all, as a band. I think that it's pretty much understood that to live in this society it's really difficult to get by without working, and if you can do that, the more power to you, but yeah we're not an anti-work band. I feel that there is definitely a middle ground between working and living your life. Basically just find a job that suits your needs. Find a job that makes you happy. It may be difficult, but just do some research and if you put your mind to it, you can probably pull it off.

Stimp: On that note I have seen my dad bust his ass in a factory for almost 40 years of his life, say what you want, but he did it because he had to support a family. It's kinda of fucked up that he traded so much to have a green piece of paper that gives you things. Forty years that my father won't get back and that makes me mad. No one should waste their life for money, but like Sikander said you do what you have to do to survive. I guess what I am saying is that you should open your eyes and your mind to see that there are other ways to live rather then working in a factory or doing some shit job for some asshole corporation.

MRR: Now what with the springing up of some great bands from Toledo, which had a fairly stagnant scene for years now, do you see any new growth? Any new kids coming around or new bands starting?

Stimp: Toledo will always have something going. We might not have the best scene in the world but we will always have great kids who support what is going on. I hope that in some way our scene will grow and more kids become involved but only time will tell. As far as bands go in the scene, Bronson 335 is from here and they play similar stuff to what we play. We are doing a split with them and it should be out really soon. Our drummer Graham also has a project going where he plays guitar and they are called the Knuckleheads. If you come to Toledo and want to skate get a hold of us we are always down and we'll show you around. Check out our DIY skate shop, Just Skateboards (419.534.3433) skater owned and operated like it should be!

MRR: So the 7" is out and seems to be going well. What's next on the plate and where can kids get your 7"?

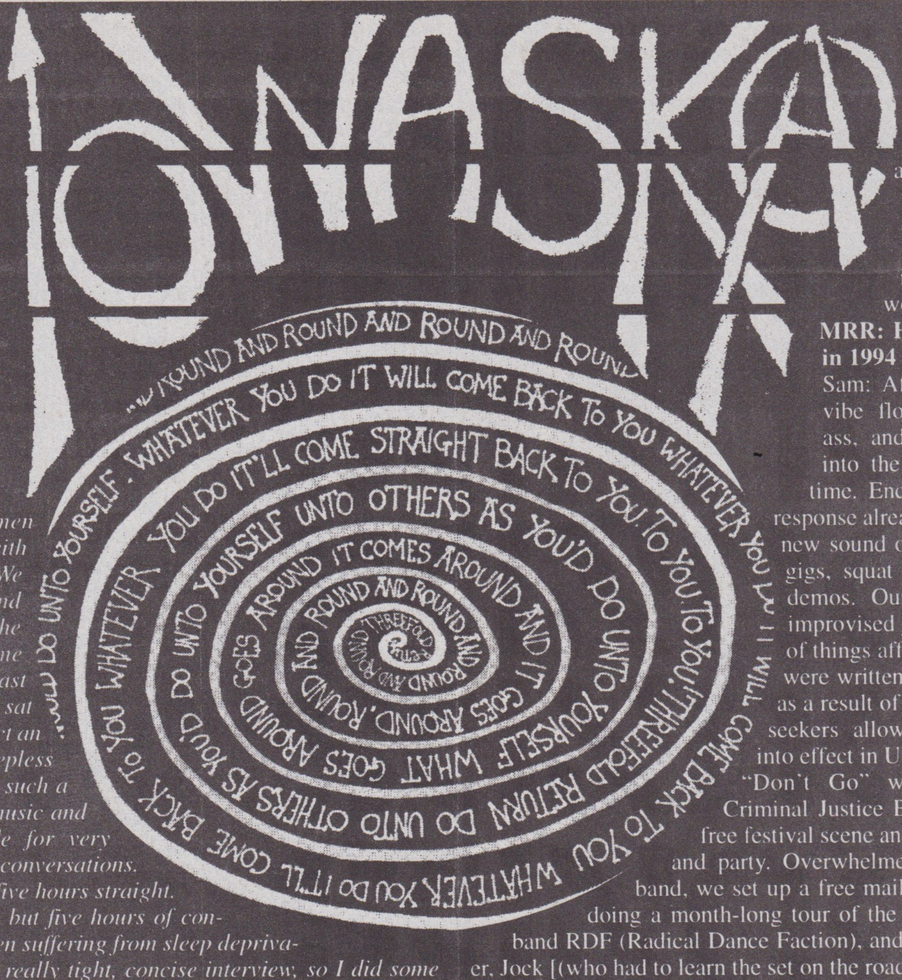
Sikander: Next on the plate is either a split 10" or 12" with Bronson 335, Graham's other band, who are awesome. This will come out on four tee gee Records/Element Records as a split release and a split EP on Solution Records with Red Reaction, who are an amazing band from Massachusetts. Our EP can be bought from Element Records, here's the address: Element Records, 23144 Cleveland, Dearborn, MI 48124, but by the time you read this you should be able to get it from Ebullition, Very, Plus/Minus, Revelation, and Element Europe, among others.

MRR: Any closing comments, trick tips, or shouts out?

Sikander: Here's my trick tip—don't quit skating and don't rollerblade. Also, keep an eye out for these bands from the Midwest: Carcrash—Andy from Ruination's new band where he plays bass...they are influenced by Japanese HC like Gauze and GISM and stuff like that; Coalition—melodic HC from Detroit on Smorgasbord; Bloodpact—their new stuff is amazing!; Bronson 335—fast hardcore from Toledo, one of the craziest live bands around; Feast or Famine—crusty HC, they cover Septic Death and Reagan Youth. Fun as hell...and there's plenty more where these came from. Thanks to MRR/Tony for the interview. Thanks to Element skate core for putting out or EP and helping us out so much, and thanks to four tee gee and Solution for helping out with our upcoming releases. And anyone who helped us with shows in anyway—there's too many to list.

Stimp: Thanks to all our friends who helped us out and all the skate punks out there who still do it for fun and not fashion, fuck trick tips go out and just ride. And everyone needs to listen to more Necros and JFA! Contact: 419.534.3433 - 4627 Gilhouse Road, Toledo, Ohio 43623

WE'RE FUCKED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IT COMES AROUND AND IT GOES AROUND WHAT GOES AROUND, ROUND AND ROUND AND ROUND AND ROUND THREEFOLD RETURN

In May of this year, I got the opportunity to spend time with Sam Skraeling and Graham Campbell of Cawdor, both originally from the Skraelings (a punk band familiar on the UK underground circuit) and currently with the band Iowaska. Sam and Graham flew from England to San Francisco in order to get a feel for the USA and see what it would take to set up a tour. They ended up staying at Burnt Ramen Studios (where I live) with me for about four days. We hung out and talked and played music together the whole time and became good friends. On the last night they were here, we sat down and tried to conduct an interview, after a few sleepless nights. These folks have such a rich history in the UK music and activist scenes, it made for very deep and informative conversations. We talked that night for five hours straight. We recorded everything, but five hours of conversation, especially when suffering from sleep deprivation, doesn't make for a really tight, concise interview, so I did some follow-up with Sam and Graham via email after they returned to their home in England. Interview by John the Baker, jtbaker666@juno.com.

MRR: Iowaska is a psychedelic root used by an indigenous community in the rainforests of Brazil. I'm interested to know what inspired the band to form, and why you chose the name Iowaska?

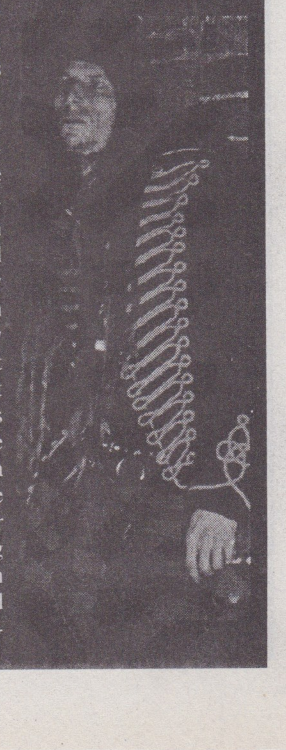
Sam Skraeling: The concept of Iowaska was born during a state of conflict, when protest met state, to fight against the proposed new policies of the Criminal Justice Bill in the UK, which aimed at criminalizing people who attended protest demos, free festivals, and illegal gatherings of any kind. The venue was an illegal free festival at an incinerator plant in Otterborne UK where we got together with Martin H., an Ozzy bass player from Pain, and played an impromptu, improvised gig on a DIY stage, in the summer of '92. Having broken through police blockades to hold the festival, spirits were high amongst the 10,000 or so protesters and festival goers, and feeding off the frenzy as the crowd went wild, insisting we played more, the Iowaska sound was formed, and it was the chemistry from that gig that sowed the seed for our future sound. Two years later we (Sam, Graham, and Martin), finally met up again, this time with Mark P. on bass. The original spark formed and that initial union of souls was reignited. The name was inspired by an Arthur Brown song about the hallucinogenic drug, "Ayahuasca," which means "Vine of Souls" when translated, and so seemed an appropriate name. However, when we showed it to people written down, they couldn't pronounce it, so we changed the spelling to our own unique, phonetic version: Iowaska.

Graham Skraeling: Appropriate also because Ayahuasca is a psychedelic root used by a threatened, indigenous, rainforest community for enlightenment. That's what we want our music and lyrics to be or do, to work like a drug to awaken people to learn from, rather than destroy, indigenous cultures worldwide.

MRR: How long after forming in 1994 did you start to tour?

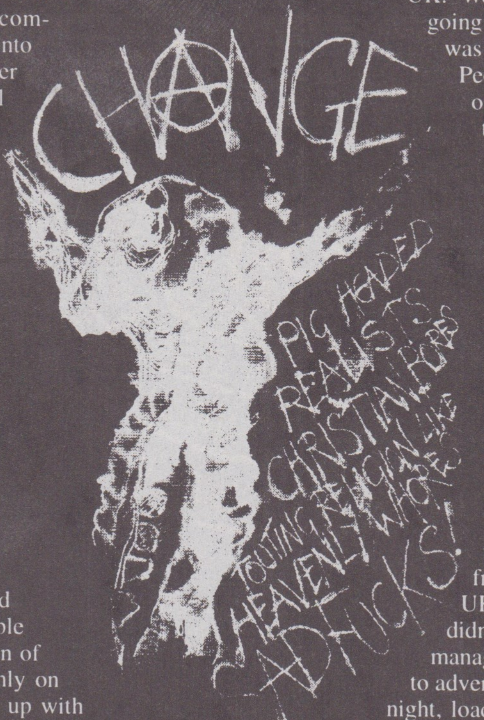
Sam: After only three jams the vibe flowed, the music kicked ass, and lyrically I had tapped into the ethos and angst of the time. Encouraged by the positive response already received, we took our new sound on the road playing punk gigs, squat gigs, free festivals, and demos. Our songs started live as improvised jams, the lyrics speaking of things affecting us at the time they were written. "Big Deal" was written as a result of the "New Deal" and jobseekers allowance laws which came into effect in UK thanks to Mr Blair, and "Don't Go" was a response to the Criminal Justice Bill which threatened the free festival scene and people's right to protest and party. Overwhelmed by the interest in the band, we set up a free mailing list at gigs, and after doing a month-long tour of the UK supporting punk/ska band RDF (Radical Dance Faction), and getting a new bass player, Jock [(who had to learn the set on the road along the way due to the original bass player loosing the plot in a paranoid frenzy after more coke than he could handle (laughter)], we had amassed a few thousand names all wanting more and preferably a recording as soon as possible. Being a DIY band, we set about pressing some live tapes recorded on the '95 tour, selling them from the back of our van or at gigs, and by keeping costs low we were able to sell them really cheap (only £2.50 each). Any surplus money made from them or gigging we plowed back into getting t-shirts printed and putting out a free fanzine (covering news from the underground scene) for everyone on our mailing list and to hand out at gigs.

MRR: You two have quite a history organizing political action and music. Can you tell me a little about your roles in the UK scene during the early 80s?



Sam: Both Graham and I had come from the anarcho-punk scene. I had been actively involved in the underground scene since the early 80s, as one of the founding members of the Anarchy and Peace Center on Rosebury Ave., London (I also organized some gigs there), and one of the many organizers at the Stop The City demo in London. Their headquarters, at the Anarchy and Peace Center, was raided the night before the demo by 13 vanloads of riot police in full riot gear, armed with shields and truncheons. The police stormed the building, which was also being used as a crash center for the demo to house people from out of London for the event. Over 300-400 people were downstairs in the gig venue part of the building being briefed on creches, free solicitors, first aid vans, and such, when the police raided, seizing liter-

ature on the planned route and anything else they deemed subversive. They also took people's personal diaries and address books, they said as evidence, but really to gather information on people involved. Many of us never got our stuff back and a good friend of mine who had been an active member of Greenham Common Peace Camp, among others, was arrested and manhandled for putting up a fight. My distrust of the police had already begun years before, but now it was compounded into sheer anger and total mistrust of a system which feared freedom of thought and expression.



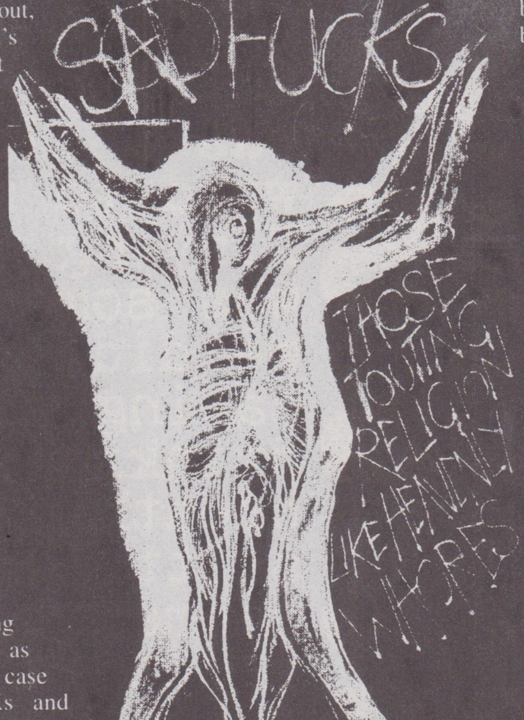
Being drawn to the dark side of life (and an early Birthday Party, Killing Joke fan), I was also involved during the early days of the Batcave, which was a brilliant club when Ollie, Johnny Klein (Speciemen) started it but after two moves from its initial seedy sex club venue in Soho, its third location never had the same seedy feel and ambience, it was more commercial. However, I didn't hang around much once the scene had become a parody of itself, and some people truly believed they were the original "Spawn of Satan," but only on a part-time basis or only on evenings or weekends. Instead, having met up with Amebix, I spent much of my time in Bristol, hitchhiking down from London at weekends, and although I was still living/squatting at the Anarchy and Peace Center, some of the stupid politics and the, "who's the most anarchist anarchist" shit made me spend more and more time squatting with Amebix and Disorder in Bristol. Not only were they more fun, but I also became involved in doing some of the promotion for Amebix as well as adding my vocal sound on the Amebix *No Sanctuary* EP. I moved down to Bristol full time and it was through my association with Amebix that I was first introduced to the festival scene, with bands like Amebix, Antisect, the Subhumans. I could see the potential of a bouncer, pig, and redneck free zone to play, and the DIY style of the free fest scene suited the anarcho punk scene well. This was the start of a beautiful friendship and I vowed after my first Stonehenge that I would get my own truck to convert into my transient home one day, (which I did do, eventually). While I was actively involved in working (and playing hard) with Amebix, I suggested, with the contacts that I'd made while working for the Batcave, that maybe someone could help them out, and so took the demo of *No Sanctuary* to both Anagram (subsidiary of Cherry Red Records) and the London offices of Alternative Tentacles. However, both said they were not interested. Later we found out that Jello Biafra hadn't even been consulted on the decision—he said, when he eventually found out years later, that he would have jumped at the chance, if only he'd known at the time. Yet it was the experience and contacts gained during my wayward and colorful past which served me well while doing all the promotion and booking for Iowaska, and through much blagging, I have managed to secure us many a good gig with bands such as Citizen Fish, Dirt, Zodiac Mindwarp, Captain Sensible and Arthur Brown, to name a few. We also lent much of our time to support and play demos, benefit gigs, and protest marches for causes important to us, like anti-globalization, anti-vivisection, and anti-hunting. We have a track on a compilation album put out by Leicester Hunt Saboteurs; all proceeds go to them, the album is called *Hunting Sucks*, and is available on tape in the UK. We also supported the anti-roadbuilding protests going on throughout the UK, where ancient woodland was under threat from the new road building program. People were forced out of homes en route, including old people who had lived in the same homes all their lives and didn't want to move...a fuckin outrage. It was this dedicated, often unpaid support which gained us respect on the underground circuit and spread the word about Iowaska.

MRR: So, how did you eventually meet up with Alternative Tentacles?

Sam: Well, having played hundreds of gigs all across the UK, and receiving such a positive response, our next goal was to get a studio recording released and my first choice of a politically sound record company was Alternative Tentacles. I sent a copy of our "live 95" tape to the London offices of AT, however it was a year and a half later before Jello got to see or hear it. He loved it and got in touch straightaway, as he wanted to see us play live to make his final decision. I received a phone call from Jello two weeks before he was due over to the UK asking if he could see us play and although we didn't have a gig booked on the dates he was over, I managed to book us one at short notice. Without time to advertise and all, we feared the worst, however on that night, loads of people had turned up to see us play, even Paco from Conflict was there. The venue was packed to capacity and the crowd was going wild. Biafra was even spotted, "getting down" in the mosh!! It was a brilliant night, we were rockin...so we were told!! And the rest, as they say, is history. Biafra loved us even more live, saying, "You have an immense and awesome sound live!" and he asked if we would like to record an album on Alternative Tentacles. What a question, eh? Just thinking back to him saying it puts a grin on my face! Which was all we could do at the time when he asked (and its not often I'm left speechless).

MRR: What do you think about Jello being sued by the other Dead Kennedys. Does that make you skeptical regarding working with AT?

Sam: Our ultimate ambition wasn't only to release an album but as I said, to release one with a politically sound label and they don't come more politically sound than Jello and AT. [Biafra's] been an inspiration to a generation, while also offering the disaffected, under represented voice of the underground a vehicle to express themselves and get heard above the hyped shit of mainstream music. Yet he's now paying a price for being politically sound. Just because he wouldn't sell out to a Levis commercial, the rest of the DKs, as I understand it, have ganged up against him to try to break him, because he won't agree to use an anti-war song to sell fucking trousers?! Let's face it, few people stick to their principles when vast sums of cash are waved about, but Jello has, and it's because of that strength of conviction (among many other things) that Jello is justifiably respected worldwide. However, it's not without a price, as sticking to his convictions has cost him dearly, in lawyer's fees alone, as well as lots of mud-slinging rumors. In fact, there have been a few people in the UK spreading rumors, but as far as the other court case between the DKs and Jello regarding royalties and such, it's between them, none of my business, and as I understand it, the case is still going. In my humble opinion, Jello's a brilliant guy, sound as fuck, maybe some people just choose to forget how much he's done other than the DKs, for example, Lard, and many more solo projects which he has made his own money from as well as his spoken word. But he constantly plows it back into the record label to secure a chance to be heard for new bands like us, not herded in the music mart! The man never stops—he's rarely at home, lately, taking his spoken word globally, yet still personally answers all his mail, (which comes by the crate load), actually listens to bands' demos no matter how shitty the tape quality as well as keeping in contact and involved with all bands projects already on AT. That sort of dedication is a labor of love, not the actions of a bread head, enough said.



Graham: That's one of the reasons, when it came to recording our album, we decided to record as cheaply as possible and opted for a 16 track analog studio, local to us, where we'd worked before and got on well with the engineer, which helps.

Sam: I also did all the artwork for the album myself by hand, true old style DIY.

MRR: You're also on the *Ecstasy of the Agony* compilation, right?

Sam: Yes, we went into the studio in Dec '99 to record a tester demo of the studio for Jello to hear the studio's sound and recorded a version of, "Modranicht" and "Ayahuasca." As we thought, this was not for release, we didn't bother to mix it as it had been recorded to a click track (engineers suggestion) and we preferred to record backbone, just bass, drums and guitar, done live. However, Biafra was so keen to release something of ours he asked if he could use the unmixed version of, "Modranicht" on the latest AT compilation album, *The Ecstasy of the Agony*. Obviously we agreed, it was a chance to spread the word before the Iowaska album got released and the start of our discography on AT, it was also a chance to be on an album with some great bands, including coincidentally, Amebix, one of many quirky twists of fate and obviously meant to be.

Graham: So, as past met present, Iowaska are only the second British band to be signed to AT and Sam Skraeling has been involved in both....

MRR: [to Graham] So, is Sam like the creative inspiration for Iowaska?

Sam: As an angry young woman, I have learned my skills from the best of them and hopefully draw upon all of this to create the sound and sentiment of Iowaska, but I am only a part of that sound, with the thundering drums of Martin and Jock's throbbing bass lines, not forgetting the driving power and haunting melody of Graham's guitar. We are a union of like minded souls, passionate about what we do and with so much still to say each time we get together the ideas keep on flowing. We feed from our audience and like a fifth member of the band, they play as important a part in Iowaska as any of us.

MRR: So the audience is a big inspiration. What else are you inspired by?

Sam: Everything has the potential to be inspirational, even the negative shit. It just depends what you decide to gain from life's experiences. Sometimes I get depressed by the actions of mankind, however I use that anger and sorrow as inspiration for my creativity, using the negative to create something positive. I feel that millions of people worldwide are all feeling equally dissatisfied with the way the world is being run or managed—Seattle and Genoa being recent examples of the people showing this by standing up against all the shit. However, now you can be shot at for showing your dissatisfaction—police state brutality in the 21st century. History has proved that people have the power to change things en masse and I draw inspiration from and am urged to write, sing, and shout about what I feel is important to be heard above the hyped shit in mainstream music. There's plenty of, "oh ah la la I love you," to drown in the sickly mush. Anti establishmentarianism has found its way into music since music began to be played, from tribal drum-induced trance to modern day angst, and in the last 30 years, from the drug-induced sounds of psychedelia to the political protest songs and anarchist anthems. Iowaska draw inspiration from all of these and more.

MRR: Do you plan to tour outside the UK anytime soon?

Sam: Our next aim is to bring our sound to small towns and cities worldwide. Well that's our dream, as far as starting to fulfill that dream we are planning a tour of UK in next few months and we should be coming back over to US in spring next year, this time to play live. I can't wait !! We did speak of coming over this winter and if gigs can be sorted out by then, we'll be there! Hopefully playing Burnt Ramen too, eh?

http://www.alternativetentacles.com

IOWASKA

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"I don't think we ever thought about why we did it. 'Career' was a dirty word to us. Playing music was something we did, like eating and drinking, breathing and shitting. It seemed to be a natural function."

Steve Lake
(vocals/bass)

THE STORY OF ZOUNDS

BY LANCE HAHN

At the ULU venue in London, Zounds are tearing through their set. Songs about squatting and alienation become anthems for the choir, as opposed to sermons. The gig is a benefit for defendants arrested for passing out leaflets about vegetarianism in front of a McDonald's. The audience is an enthusiastic and mesmerized stew of squatters, punks, hippies, and all the gray area in between. But, this isn't a journal entry from 20 years ago. This is 1998.

Of the many bands, anarcho and otherwise, revisiting the past recently, Zounds seem especially current. This is partly because the lyrics about the aforementioned subjects are in many ways as relevant under Blair's England as it was under Thatcher's. But, also because of the musical status as outsiders within the underground that prevented them from ever being typecast to one particular style. Of course, that same uniqueness kept them from benefiting from the recognition and success that many of their peers did. Unlike other bands in that situation, this reunion gig was a one-off affair, strictly for the greater good.

Steve, "We never re-formed. We just did a couple of benefit gigs for the McLible campaign. Dave Morris, the defendant, was an old friend of ours. I don't know why, but I have a particular hatred of McDonald's."

Formed in 1977, Zounds started as a nameless "jam" band, made up of constantly shifting personnel. The one central figure that would eventually take control of the band's direction and give it form was Steve Lake.

His parents split up when he was five. What little contact he had with his dad was characterized by jazz music.

Steve, "I was abandoned to my grandparents when I was five. My mother went to live with her family in the USA. She was a dancing teacher. My dad ran a jazz club. He took me along once to see a New Orleans jazz band when I was about six; that was probably a key experience. He introduced me to the band, and it just seemed like such a great thing to be in a band. But, ultimately, I didn't have much contact with either of my parents."

But, he had an epiphany when he first heard The Beatles and 60s rock-n-roll. He became interested in taking part in the creative process of popular music early on.

Steve, "I was seven years old or something, and heard The Beatles on the radio, and I was so overwhelmed I still haven't come down. The Beatles, Bob Dylan, The Byrds, The Who, Tamla Motown, Hank Williams, Johnny Cash; I always liked the good stuff."

A few years later, he began learning how to play, in order have a more physical connection to the music. At 15, he met a guitar player named Terry Small who gave him the right encouragement to pick up the bass.

Steve, "He and a drummer were trying to get a three piece heavy blues band together, like Cream. We got on really well, and he said I could play bass in their band. He said it was easy, as there were only four strings and they were so big you couldn't miss them. I got a bass and the rest, as they say, is history."

The desire to play over-shadowed the "what" and "where", as the only things more dubious than some of the music he was playing were the venues where he would play them.

Steve, "[I learned to play the bass] when I was 16. I started playing in a rock'n'roll band, doing Chuck Berry, Eddie Cochran and Presley stuff in brothels and Speedway club dances."

Like many kids at that age in that time, he felt like he had been born too late. Being born in the 60s or late 50s meant you were too young for the birth of rock-n-roll. You were a bit too young for mod and a little too young for the hippies. You were truly a rebel (anti-establishmentarian) without a cause (youth culture). For many people, this was the psychic swamp that bred punk rock.

Steve, "I wanted to be a hippie, but I was too young. So when punk came along it just fitted in with our bohemian, anti-establishment view. I hitchhiked three hundred miles to buy *Anarchy In The UK* the day it was banned and withdrawn by E.M.I."

Growing up in Reading, Steve eventually was drawn to local counter-culture there.

Steve, "Reading was a market town with a cowboy mentality. Now it's a bland software-based shopping mall type of place. I had to come to London because it was— and is—the center of many things I love and hate."

Despite that, there was enough of a scene that Steve was able to find people to play music with. This original improvised music would be the building blocks of Zounds.

Steve, "Zounds originally evolved out of a series of jamming scenes that took place between various groups of friends of mine. First of all, we were based around the Reading area. Circumstances moved us to Oxford, where we developed a very 'peripheral' lifestyle that consisted of a lot of jamming, a lot of painting and drawing, an enormous amount of dope smoking, and more than a passing interest in LSD and psychedelia. None of us had jobs, we were unhealthily terrified of the police, and were unknowingly engaged in the process of transforming ourselves from happy-go-lucky, harmlessly mischievous teenagers into marginalized, paranoid wrecks who had become totally alienated from the 'straight life'. Musically we were involved in a lot of weird free-form jamming that was influenced by everything from The Velvet Underground and Can to The Grateful Dead and The Byrds."

From these "open" sessions, a proper band eventually took shape. Taking form around Steve's organization and song writing, Zounds was first documented in the public eye in 1977.

Steve, "The first incarnation of Zounds must have formed and started doing gigs in 1977 or 1978. Lawrence was around then, but he wasn't in the band. We didn't meet Joseph until a couple of years after that. The idea of recording demos never crossed our mind. We were absolutely alienated from the world of record companies and mainstream 'cultural business'. We were complete outsiders. I don't mean in the sense of some Hollywood Rock 'n' Roll leather jacket version of outsider. More in the sense that we had become social cripples, barely able to function and interact with anyone outside of our particular bohemian cesspit."

In fact, it was the guitarist that preceded Lawrence who came up with the band's name.

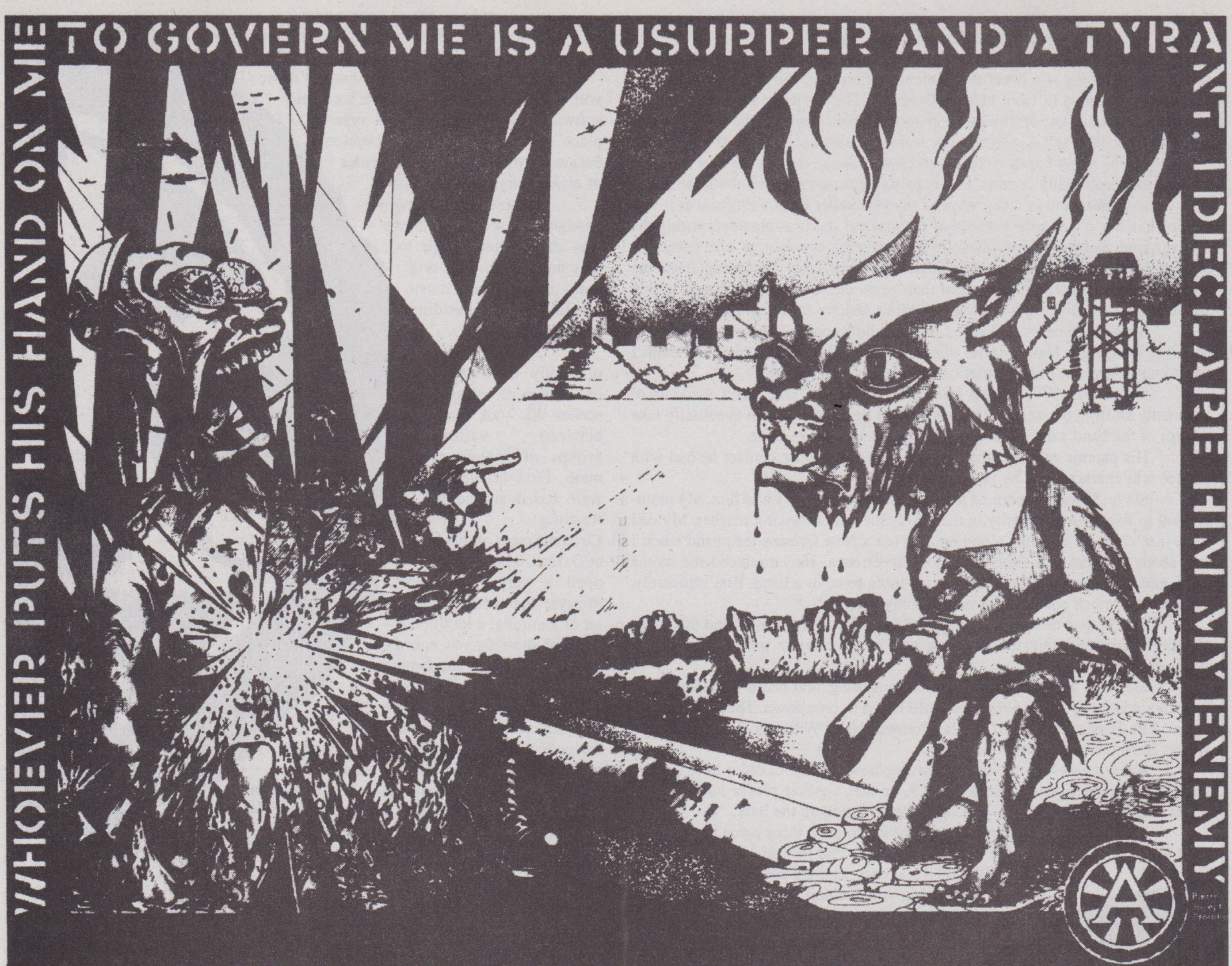
Steve, "Steve Burch, our original guitarist, found it in a dictionary. We always mispronounced it to rhyme with 'sounds'. It's an exclamation; a corruption of the phrase 'gods wounds' which we thought was appropriate at the time. Though I grew not to like it pretty quickly and am still not keen on it. Actually God's Wounds would have been a better name. I could start a Zounds tribute band and call it God's Wounds."

Though still in a sort of psychedelic funk, the band was aware and interested in punk from more than just a sociological perspective. The result was that their first gig was supporting a local punk band.

Steve, "Yes, the first gig was as a three piece and we didn't have the name Zounds at that point. We supported a punk band at a village rock club near Reading. At that point, the line up was me on bass, Steve Burch on guitar, and Jimmy Lacey on drums.

"Then we added Nick Godwin on guitar for our second gig. This was at Oxford Polytechnic, supporting Australian-psychedelic fruitcake, David Allen, who had previously been in Soft Machine and Gong. We were still doing a lot of improvising and free-form stuff at that point, but they were really dynamite gigs, full of fire and power and energy. The Oxford Poly gig was the first time we played 'Can't Cheat Karma' and Steve Burch came up with that great way of playing that riff. It was the best performance of it really. They were great gigs, but you would have had to be there to get it, I think. Tapes don't do those kinds of events justice."

While being self-described outsiders, the normal band activity of


WHOEVER PUTS HIS HAND ON ME
TO GOVERN ME IS A USURPER AND A TYRANT.
I DECLARE HIM MY ENEMY

recording a demo tape was ignored. Despite not having an easy way to expose their music to promoters or booking agents, the band still managed to gig, and the line-up continued to evolve.

Steve, "We just didn't bother with demos. Despite our fragile, broken egos, we were supremely arrogant and felt if the world deserved Zounds they would have to seek us out, we were not going to chase after anything. In our childish, fantasy world, we regarded it as inevitable that the world would beat a path to our door. And, at first, things progressed in that way. Our fourth or fifth gig was reviewed in the *New Musical Express,* which at the time was pretty much the main voice of youth culture. It wasn't a great review, but it made us think we were on the map and recognized. It wasn't really until we moved to London and got Lawrence in, that I started to think we were going to have to make a record and somehow pursue that notion, as nobody was coming forward to offer us the chance to make a record.

"Anyway, after Steve Burch left and Lawrence joined, the band deteriorated terribly. We became directionless and plodding. It took us a lot of playing and a lot of gigs to get good again. Which we did."

With the band's music evolving from jam sessions and free experimentation into more conventional song structures, there had to be a new concern about the process of lyric writing and what was to be written about. In writing about his surroundings, there was much fodder for angry expression in late 70s Britain, as it's economic and therefore political climate was a weather vein for what would become Thatcher's England.

Steve, "Well, my music and my songs have always been born out of my experience of living in and observing the world around me.

"As I said, we were pretty alienated from mainstream society, and consequently mainstream politics, including traditional radical left politics. But our experience was that the world of work was oppressive, tedious and destructive and offered us nothing but drudgery and boredom. We had constant hassles with the police for looking like freaks; it was becoming really difficult to find affordable places to live. We really started to understand that we had 'no future'. At first we would not have even recognized this position as being political. But things were really hotting up in England during 1978-1979. The Right was starting to exercise a lot of muscle and becoming noticeably and violently more of a presence. The National Front were gaining ground and the Conservatives were following them to the right. Ditching the old post-war consensus and preparing the way for hard Thatcherite, corporate, market economy.

"At the same time elements of the police force were completely out of control: the S.P.G. in London, the West Midlands Crime Squad. Unemployment was rising and race relations were becoming a potent issue.

"On top of all of this, we were becoming aware of the massive build-up of nuclear weapons by the USA and the Eastern Bloc, which led to the reactivation of C.N.D. and various environmental groups. No sensible, intelligent person could fail to see what was happening and how bad things could become. We couldn't fail to become more politicized and see how political power was impinging on our lives.

"That is why things like Rock Against Racism and the Anti-Nazi League started. We started to see ourselves as enemies of the state, just because of the way we thought; we weren't activists in any sense of the word. Yet we felt we were under attack by the forces of society. These things affected everything we did, how we lived, what we ate, who we slept with. And ultimately the songs we wrote and the way we played them.

"We were never attracted to the organized left with its in-fighting and dogma and rules. We were instinctively drawn towards anarchy. Not because we had much of a clue as to what it was about, but we just wanted to be left alone to pursue our own weird trip and not have people tell us what to do."

While much of the anarcho punk movement at the start was referred to as being "hippie punk" or "peace punk", the terms usually were meant to define ideology and practice. But within the traveler scene that had been developing for some time, there were musical bridges being created with punk bands like Alternative Television and hippie bands like Here & Now. For Zounds, the mesh of musical ideas had more to do with the psychedelia of the 60s rather than the acid rock of the 70s.

Steve, "The very earliest incarnations of Zounds were really into psychedelic San Francisco bands. We were also in to Can, The Velvet Underground, lots of weird stuff, the early Mothers of Invention. The Byrds, The Beach Boys, The Beatles. We were really into music. That was always the thing with us. I really got into Patti Smith early on, things like 'Piss Factory'. The early punk stuff that was inspirational was stuff like The Fall, ATV, Patrick Fitzgerald, Buzzcocks, and American stuff like Pere Ubu and Television. But we were never trying to emulate anybody; we were trying to find ourselves through music. I think Robert Smith was also kind of marrying the weird and unusual with a pop sensibility, which I think characterizes Zounds in many ways."

But Zounds was coming to both musical camps without prejudice to either side. While many eventually identified them as a punk band, their connection was one of camaraderie rather than of punk's rank and file.

Steve, "We never saw ourselves as anything. But I personally felt very connected with the concerns of punk. The day *Anarchy In The UK* was banned and withdrawn by EMI I hitchhiked 300 miles to buy a copy. It changed everything, and at last people had the courage and audacity to just get up and say, yeah, we are fucked up, but it's our world too and we are going to do what we want, even if we've got no resources. It wasn't unprecedented but at last people were sitting up and taking notice.

"I was never into the ramma lamma, identikit punk thrash sound that soon took over punk and was very tiresome and unimaginative. What was good about it was the scenes that started up all over. The metropolitan London glam punk scene was nothing really. Just the usual old trendy, fashion crowd trying to get their pictures in magazines. That is the current official media history of punk; that it was all about these London trendsetters. But, there were more interesting things happening at the margins as usual. Us in Oxford, The Mob in Sommerset, The Astronauts in Wellwyn, The Instant Automatons in Hull... A whole load of weird, idiosyncratic bands creating their own lives and scenes and music."

The Free Festival scene of the 60s in England was the perfect incubator for Zounds. Drawn to the scene both by the politics and the desire to play, they found themselves entrenched in that gray area of hippies, punks and activists.

Steve, "Well Here And Now were doing Free Festivals and free gigs and seemed to be much more politicized than other bands, this of course was slightly prior to punk. There was a kind of radical hippie tradition that included Hawkwind, Gong, and The Pink Fairies centered around Ladbroke Grove. The Pink Fairies were influenced by the radical politics of The MC5 and Jerry Rubin and The Yippies. A lot of future punks lived amongst this Ladbroke Grove hippie scene. Joe Strummer lived next door to Here And Now and there were people like The Slits. Everyone was getting into Reggae at that time and there was a lot of interest in Rasta."

As the punk scene began to grow, they became more and more involved with the free festivals, setting up tours and carrying on the tradition with other punk bands.

Steve, "Here And Now championed the free tours and us and The Mob dug the idea and met each other through them. We carried on the free tour idea by starting the Weird Tales tours, us, The Mob, and The Astronauts, and of course the legendary Jonathon Barnett who was an inspiration to us all."

Through the free festival scene as well as Here And Now who were very involved in the regular details of those events, Zounds were introduced to The Mob, a band they would tour with and develop close ties to.

Steve, "We had met The Mob and had done a couple of tours with them and some other bands, and through them we met Joseph. We met The Mob at a thing called the Dursley Seventh Vale Festival. And a guy called Jonathan Barnett put a tour together with us, The Mob, The Astronauts, and The Androids of Mu. We all kind of were on the fringes of the Here And Now free music scene and were under the influence of their ex-drummer, a guy called Kiff-Kiff who was an amazing guy and went on to limited fame in England with a band called World Domination Enterprises. He and Jonathan Barnett put together this outfit called Fuck Off Records, and us and The Mob put out tapes and stuff through them. We all hung out round Ladbroke Grove and Shepherds Bush. There were loads of gigs at the Acklam Hall and round West London. Then we did these mad free tours. During which we met Crass, and Zounds dwindled to just Lawrence and me."

As much as with Crass, Zounds would forever be linked with The Mob from then on.

Steve, "I think we met in 1978. We toured with them, lived in houses and buses with them, had the same drug dealers and slept with the same people. Despite that, we were never really close."

Another band at the time were The Astronauts. More closely merging the musical ideas of punk and hippie, the band still maintains a bit of a folk edge mixed with anarchist politics.

Steve, " The Astronauts were a weird band who had a very punk sensibility but didn't play punk 'music' as such. They still do a lot of DIY/fanzine type gigs. I sometimes play on the same bill as them at the more alternative venues we do. We and The Mob were always big fans of The Astronauts and they were the other main band on that scene. A lot of the other bands were kind of noise terrorists, like the 012, who later became World Domination Enterprises. Yeah, all those early tapes were on Fuck Off Records or one of its illegitimate offspring."

An engine breakdown on the last free tour led them to their first meeting with Crass. While operating separately in the same small ideological and physical space, the two groups had never met, despite similar ideas and practices.

Steve, "While on tour we kept playing places where Crass had just played, or were about to play. And people kept saying we should meet them because they detected some sort of similarity in something.

"So we were playing near their house and we thought we would just visit them. But, our bus broke down, and we walked to their house across this weird submarine tracking station and they entertained us, we got on like a church on fire, and they came and fixed our bus. They liked us, though I think they saw us as quite naive, naughty children who had their hearts in the right place."

Whether or not that was the case, the meeting had a huge impact on Steve and Zounds. He was deeply impressed by Crass as people, and by how they lived. It ultimately gave Zounds a direction that they had previously been missing, in lieu of the comparatively casual path they had been organically following.

Steve, "The people in Crass were really funny, very intelligent, and had very powerful personalities. I admired their analysis and commitment and knowledge. But generally, I remember just going round to their place and chatting about stuff and having a laugh. I liked them a lot, and am very fond of my memories of them."

That first night ended with a discussion of possible future projects together. While mostly talk, it left Steve and Lawrence with the idea that they would record a demo tape to send to Crass. But by the end of the tour, they, as well as The Mob, were somewhat defeated by the grind of maintaining that type of idealistic free tour.

Steve, "Apart from meeting Crass, that last Weird Tales tour had been grueling. The Mob split back to Somerset and Zounds lost a guitar player, Nick Godwin, and decided to chuck out our drummer. After we did the demo, we asked Joseph to join. He had followed The Mob up to London but didn't follow them back. Joseph had been playing in a mod band at the time but we liked him and knew he was committed to playing music. He sort of looked like a punk too, which Lawrence and I didn't. Anyway, Crass liked our demo and asked us to do the record on their label."

Joseph, "I joined just after they met Crass, and were presumably streamlining the band accordingly. I was drumming with a band called The Entire Cosmos, which featured members of Here And Now's road crew, and we did some of the Weird Tales gigs."

With this new line-up, condensed to a three piece, the side of the band that lent itself to open-ended jams fell to the wayside, and the more song-oriented material became the make-up of the band's set. While in some ways the band was turning into something new, it was also working on material more suited to the new line-up.

Joseph, "I moved to London to play music. I'd been drumming for Attitudes for about a year when Zounds asked me to join. All the jamming stuff ended then, it was pretty much down to short sharp songs, a lot of which were never recorded."

At this stage, the band was living in the squatted area of Broughham Road.

Steve, "Zounds lived in Broughham Road, which was a squatted scene peopled by old anarchists. They started to move out so we moved The Mob in and soon after came hoards of teenage runaways and the whole thing deteriorated as these things always do. It was really no different to all the scenes all over the country and the world."

With a new set of material worked out, the band met with Crass in the summer of 1980 to record their first single. Spending time with them out on their farm became an eye-opening experience for Joseph, who was still developing his own political ideas.

Joseph, "I had no intellectual concept of anarchism when I joined Zounds. I had a vague awareness of a lot of slogans, and a great fondness for cannabis resin. Steve, on the other hand, while endorsing the latter, had a better grasp of the former. I didn't care. I just wanted to be in a band."

Oddly enough, it was the discipline of Crass' anarchism that made an impact on Steve.

Steve, "We were in a different scene entirely. Much more untogether. We were all a quite a bit younger than most of Crass, along with The Mob, The Astronauts, the Androids of Mu, Here & Now, the Fuck Off Records crew, Grant Showbiz (who went on to produce the Fall and Billy Bragg and work for the Smiths). There were gigs on the Portobello Road, Ladbroke Grove. A lot of free festivals (which is another huge story in itself). Crass and Poison Girls were quite insular and very much in control of their scene."

The recording process became as much Crass' project as Zounds'. Their control over the production work on the record extended to having a session musician brought in to play Joseph's parts!

Joseph, "Simple: I wasn't any good. While I was with Attitudes, they kept my drumming disciplined, but once free of that, and into the more laid-back atmosphere of Zounds, I regressed into a clattering nuisance. Penny, who cared passionately about production, didn't want to release a record with out-of-time drums on it. He was right."

Years later, Joseph is surprisingly ambivalent about his replacement on their debut record.

Joseph, "It's one less gruesome skeleton in my cupboard."

For their first proper recording session, the band was in for an odd experience.

Steve, "It was a bit weird. We did it at Southern Studios, which was owned by Crass' business manager John Loder. At that time, the studio was in his house and the control room was in the garage.

"Was there any pressure internally or externally to conform to a sound or style of Crass? They chose the songs from our repertoire. We played them and Penny and John recorded and produced it. To some extent, they directed the performances, particularly my vocals. Crass, the band, and the Crass label were both Penny's babies really. He was the man with the vision. They made us use a session drummer who played Joseph's part. That was difficult to take, as authenticity is quite important to me. After the recording, they mixed it without us there and brought it to us for approval."

The resulting record was *You Can't Cheat Karma*. Released in early 1980, the three song EP starts with the mantra-like drone of "War". It's repetitious bass and guitar riffs are more reminiscent of the first Modern Lovers record the UK punk. Like "Pablo Picasso", the song becomes hypnotic, and the list of war-torn countries becomes a rhythm of its own.

This song leads directly into what could be the band's best-known track, "Subvert". Upbeat, but with a very clever guitar part for the verse, the song is a cross between the Minutemen and "Jumping Someone Else's Train" by The Cure. Lyrically, it's a shopping list of small daily acts of subversion:

If you've got a job
You can be an agent
If you work in a kitchen
You can redistribute food
If you are a policeman
Ordered to arrest me
You don't have to do it
You can refuse.

The title track was probably the most unique song of the bunch. With a sing-song vocal pattern, the monotone vocals make for a twisted children's song about ennui and paranoia:

But I just don't know what I can do
You don't trust me and I don't trust you
I bet you wish you did
Cos I know I do
Why have you got secrets
Well, I know you have
If you've got something to hide
Then it must be bad.

The layout for the record was simple black and white (like most of the Crass releases) with typewritten text and inked images, including a fold-out poster.

Steve, "Crass were a band who wanted things done a certain way. They had a vision, and they were not into compromise. Which is not to say they were unreasonable, but if you wanted to work with them, then it was on their terms. Nobody forced us, or anyone else to do it. And anyway, we liked them and dug what they were doing. We were happy to be associated with them. So they designed the cover, wrote the blurb and we wrote the songs and played them. Lets face it, the main reason it sold so many was because of our association with them. If it had just come out anonymously, maybe it would never have been heard.

"Ironically, I think that Crass was an early example of what is now very fashionable and significant in Western culture. And that is the whole total corporate identity. They were one of the first labels to have that sense of 'total image'."

With the release of their first record on the label run by one of Britain's premier punk rock bands of the time, Zounds found themselves playing out to a much more enthusiastic crowd that was newly made aware of the band by the one single. The band also began connecting more with the young anarcho punk scene by playing gigs with Crass. The cross-pollination would continue, with The Mob eventually recording for Crass as well.

Steve, "After the record came out on Crass we did some gigs with them. They were great live. Especially when they had all the video monitors and banners and stuff. But actually it was more like a cross between some dubious political rally and a dark Brechtian theater. Much better than on record.

"But our scene was less earnest and less developed. People coming to our gigs were kind of more bohemian than a lot of Crass' audience. Other squatters and hippie-fied punks. When we got our record out it expanded the audience, and outside of London there was a lot more working class kids who lived with their parents coming to the gigs."

Joseph, "We didn't see them often, but they were always very friendly. I was too young really to understand most of what was going on then though, and probably too stoned as well to take it in."

While always a bit cautious, Zounds found themselves apart from the traveler hippie scene that they came from, and in the middle of the anarcho punk scene. As is well documented, attempts at merging the two scenes had mixed results.

Joseph, "We almost played Stonehenge in about 1980 or 1981. We were just getting onstage, when bikers took over the generator, and decided to ban punks from the stage. That was crap—that was the reality of *Anarchy in the UK*. Stonehenge was just about taking lots of drugs. That's the only reason most people went there."

But even in their new scene, Zounds found themselves in a scene at times more anarchist by propaganda then by deed.

Steve, "Ironically, there was a very strict hierarchy in the Crass camp that was acknowledged but accepted. Crass at the top, Poison Girls were their second in command, and Zounds, Flux and The Mob were favored subjects. But, in all honesty, that was about right, because Crass were phenomenally popular far beyond the anarcho scene. Their significance has never been fully realized, to my way of thinking.

"Outside of the Crass thing, when we were giggling a lot with The Mob, their was a lot of sharing and cooperation and working together. But I think there were definitely less benign forces at work below the surface. There were definitely jealousies and petty backstabbing going on. But I prefer to remember the good things, though that can be difficult sometimes."

The band continued to exist mainly as a live act. Tours with Crass and The Poison Girls made them take more concern about their actual performance and the result was some of their best gigs.

Steve, "The Acklam hall in Portobello Road was a legendary gig, and Zounds and The Mob and The Astronauts did loads of free gigs there. That was where we really got it together as bands.

"A short tour with Crass and The Poison Girls and Zounds in 1980 really inspired me. I realized we were just fucking about until then. It really made me think a lot more about how we should be on stage. Zounds always loved playing in Holland and Belgium most though, and the best was playing in 1981 in Berlin, in the heart of the anarchist squatting quarter called Kreutzburg. They were brilliant gigs, fantastic audiences, and we were really happening on stage at that point."

With the one off single with Crass helping to establish the band nationally, they struck a deal with Crass' old label, Rough Trade. This relationship would last the band through most of its recording career.

Steve, "Geoff Travis made all the decisions about who was signed and what was released. They tried to run all other aspects of the company like a workers' cooperative, which led to all the usual decision-making problems most workers' co-ops seem blighted with. Plus, the banks wouldn't deal with them in the way they would with a 'normal' client, which led to cash-flow problems. Geoff was an absolutely beautiful guy whom I still admire and respect very much. I used to get a bit intimidated by the others, though. Even the warehouse staff seemed far more trendy than us and use to regard us with something like disdain."

Despite a lot of speculation about the Crass record being recorded afterwards ("I think when I was putting the cover art together I was so stoned I put the wrong year on it," says Steve), Zounds then went into the studio to record their one and only full length LP. *The Curse Of Zounds* was recorded and mixed in five days, which, oddly enough, sets it apart from the Crass style of recording that often would go on for months.

These time limitations forced the band to work intensely on the recording. Despite the contrast in recording styles from that with the Crass camp, the band remained thrilled with the process.

Steve, "It was weird but very exciting. We were pretty out of it most of the time, but we worked pretty hard on it."

Their one and only studio LP turned out to be a classic, unlike anything else at the time. An incredibly dense and claustrophobic record, it captured the paranoia of the post-hippie counter-culture, and the feeling of outsider status and its effect on the human psyche. Songs like "Did He Jump" reinforced the specific nature of society's reflected paranoia. It is startling in its poignancy, amidst the superficiality of most "punk" from that time:

Who was that on the window ledge
Did he jump or was he pushed
He left a note which no one read
In desperate hand the note just said
Didn't turn my back on society
Society turned its back on me
I never tried once to drop out
I just couldn't get in from the very start.

"Dirty Squatters", which was one of the more direct anthems on the record, was also one of the first direct acknowledgments of that scene and it's connection with the underground:

Some dirty squatters moved into my street
With their non-sexist haircuts and their dirty feet
Their dogs and cats, political elite
They may have beds but they don't use sheets
Furnishing their houses from the contents of skips

Things that decent people put on rubbish tips
They look quite harmless sitting out in the sun
But I wouldn't let my daughter marry one.

Steve, "Well, paranoid is definitely a word that rings true with me, I think I have always been a paranoid person, and I don't mean that metaphorically. I think I really do have clinical paranoia. For example, I never fly, which means I will probably never return to the USA even though most of my family lives there. I almost always avoid going in lifts, I hate the underground, and many other things of that nature. I have always been terribly fearful of the police, though I have never really been involved in anything illegal. I am also something of a hypochondriac and worry like mad when my kids come home late. So in many ways it is no wonder that this tends to surface in my music.

"Claustrophobic is a great word to describe the album. And that's the way I felt at the time. I think that is why I responded so well to going to Berlin. The way it was this small island surrounded by and walled in by an 'alien regime'. I still have tremendous nostalgia for the Cold War. I know Joseph does to. It's not because I think the Cold War was good, but because it echoed my state of mind. When we did the album, I felt we were existing in our own little world, closed in and only in contact with similar scenes dotted randomly around Europe. I hated it when we were thrust into contact with the wider world. Everything seemed hostile to me. Not just the big global things like nuclear war, government corruption, corporate greed, and media brainwashing, but even the everyday world of supermarkets, family life, little Hitler bosses, aggressive and insensitive teachers.

"I think that really comes through in the writing on *Curse Of Zounds*. The way in something like 'This Land' I try to take the narrative from the big global issues of ecology, pollution, and environmental breakdown to the very personal, microcosmic, local world of the streets in which we walk and live.

"'My Mummy's Gone' is similar, in that it is about the anguish and fiction of monogamous, nuclear family life expressed through a very personal experience.

"'Target' wasn't just a tirade against nuclear war, but about the effect of the nuclear build-up on people who had to live near the bases. It was a very significant feature of Zounds songs that the so-called political issues and social landscape was always related to the everyday ways in which we lived. I think that's our attraction for many people, that it is not just sloganeering, but is born out of the frustration and powerlessness we actually felt—and still feel—everyday, and how that effects our personal behavior and personal relationships. I love the songs of American folk singer Woody Guthrie for much the same reason. Though, of course, I would never compare my own limited talents to his inspired genius. As Leonard Cohen said of Hank Williams, "He's 100 floors above me in the tower of song." Probably thousands of floors actually."

Released in 1981, the record was like a film noir that starts off with unease and paranoia, and ends with a collapsing world much worse and larger than first imagined. It was perfect that it would start with "Fear" and end with a re-vamping of "War".

Steve, "Yes, we wanted it to be cohesive. We tried recording it in the order we wanted the tracks to appear, which is what happened, with one or two slight changes. It had to start with 'Fear' as it set the whole context for the rest of the album. As you pointed out, it is the world view of someone blighted by paranoia, and the rest of the songs are from the perspective of someone scared shitless by everything. It ends with 'Target/Mr. Disney' and a snatch of 'War' (re-titled 'The War Goes On'). Because whatever was going on was existing in the shadow of the impending nuclear threat, and US cultural and military imperialism, in particular the positioning of cruise missiles in the English countryside. At the time this was of massive significance in Europe and we all felt very close to the issue. Many people believed that we were heading for a nuclear catastrophe and so it was very much an overriding concern at the time. Ending the album with the reprise of 'War' and letting it fade out in full flight was just to emphasize that war was not just an historical fact but an ongoing aspect of the human condition and that we shouldn't forget that, and we needed to do something about it, fast. The revised title refers to a song the Scottish folk singer, Donavon, used to play called 'The War Drags On', I don't know if he wrote it but I liked it a lot. It might be a Tim Harding song, I'd like to find out actually."

The cover art by Clifford Harper was perfectly suited. Known for his anarchist-oriented woodcuts, Harper's artwork captured both the urgency of the times, and a playfulness, with a wraparound cover being utilized for comedic purposes.

Steve, "Love it, love the joke, and I have always been keen on comics so it was just right. Cliff had originally done it for the cover of a magazine called *Anarchy* and redrew it for us. He did it during the fireman's strike of the late 1970's. We thought fireman were heroic, in that they did a dangerous and selfless job, and were drawn from well-intentioned working class people. I think he ripped off the concept from a cartoon in the right wing London newspaper *The Evening Standard*. Lawrence and I helped publish a book of Cliff's work, and a biography called *The Education of Desire*, which I still think is one of the best things I've been involved with."

In the process of recording the record, the band involved themselves with Adam Kidron, who was given production credits, although his job was more a glorified engineer.

Steve, "Adam Kidron was the millionaire son and heir of the socialist publisher who owned Pluto Press. He was really funny and we were very naive and impressed by him. He talked us into giving him producer royalties, when we didn't even know what royalties were and we thought we were producing the album ourselves. We recorded the album in the order we wanted the tracks to be, though we did revise the order slightly. I thought it was really important that it was a coherent record, where the track order had some sort of internal logic. Adam hated guitars so we ended up with a far less powerful guitar sound than we would have liked. We were a guitar band after all."

With Rough Trade behind the record, publicity and reviews were prevalent, including a full-color poster campaign in London.

Steve, "It got some good reviews and some not-so-good ones, but it didn't get us known much beyond the anarcho scene."

The band did their part by playing live as much as possible, though they quickly went from the "proper" channels back to DIY methods.

Steve, "We just tried to play all the time. Rough Trade's agents booked us some gigs, but they were all wrong for us so we just got fans and like-minded individuals to book gigs at community centers and such places. We hated getting involved with music biz types and promoters and agents and the rest of the hangers-on."

Yet, by the time the record was released, the band had grown sour on it. Their concerns about the mix, they felt, were confirmed with the final product.

Steve, "We thought it sounded great when we did it, but as soon as it came out we went off it I think. We thought the guitars weren't big enough and it was all a bit lightweight. When we first met Geoff at Rough Trade, Joseph told him we wanted to sound like The Dead Kennedy's, and I think we would have been happier with that sort of powerful sound. In retrospect, though, I think it is probably better the way it is. But I'm speaking as someone who feels they have heard enough rock guitar to last several lifetimes. That's why I no longer have a guitar in my band."

Just prior to the LP's release, Rough Trade issued the *Demystification/Great White Hunter* single, which was recorded at the same time as *Curse Of Zounds*. At the time, they described the record themselves as, "Velvet Underground meets white liberal guilt."

Steve, "I can't remember whether it was Joseph or I that came up with that, but we would both have shared that point of view. We were nothing if not self-aware and self-critical. A lot of my songs tended to be about striving, and failing, and not making it, not being brave enough, not being able to live up to one's own expectations."

Though recorded at the tail-end of the session that produced the full length, the band insisted that the tracks from the single not be on the LP.

Steve, "We recorded 'Demystification' and 'Great White Hunter' at the end of the album sessions, by which time I think we were starting to get the hang of it. I would have liked to have started the whole thing again at that point. We never wanted the single on the album. Partly because of my slavish devotion to rock 'n' roll folklore. When I was a kid The Beatles and The Stones and such groups never put singles on albums. We associated it with the rip-off tactics of the music biz, selling the same thing twice. I always thought singles were cool and something different from albums. I don't know why it came out before the album. Probably something to do with Rough Trade's clever strategic marketing policy, which also remained a mystery to us."

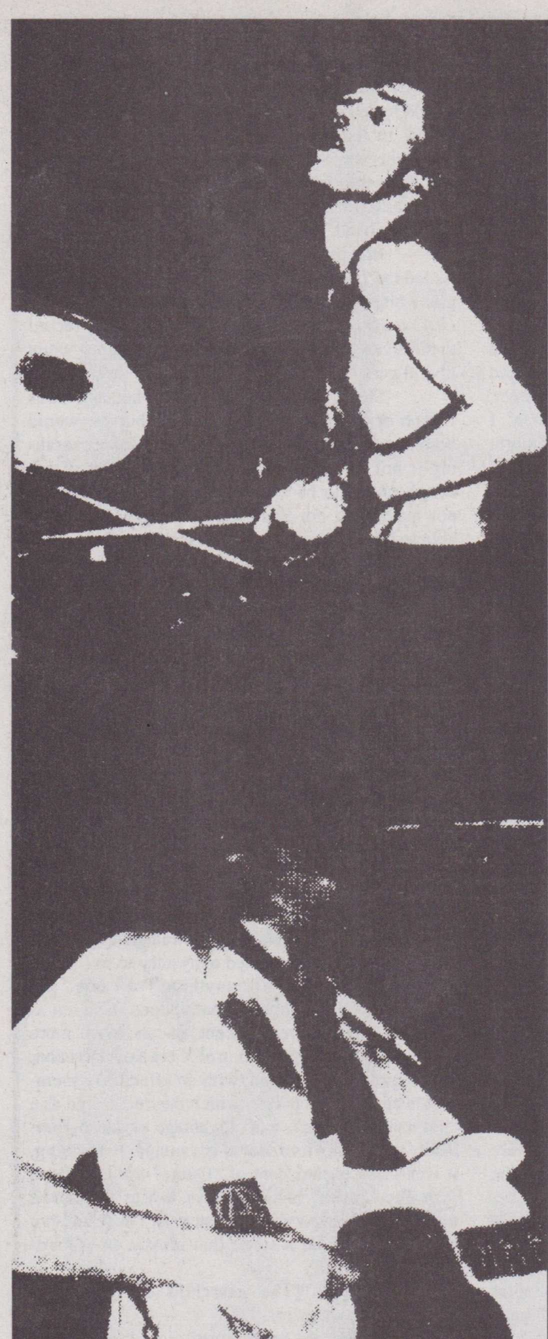
As strong as anything on the LP, "Demystification", in this context, does stand out as a single. Almost reminiscent of an even more depressed "She's Lost Control"- era Joy Division, the record is quick paced, with an effectively memorable chorus. The b-side, which they described as a "hot dance number", took advantage of the rhythm-heavy mix, using it to sparse advantage. If anything, it was more reminiscent of "Quine"-era Lou Reed than The Velvets. In some ways, it was the band's most accessible record. But that wasn't necessarily a plus, coming from a scene that mostly drew hardcore punks.

Joseph, "[The anarcho's reaction was] blank incomprehension."

The record cover wasn't your typical anarcho fair either instead using a black and white photo staged to convey the song's idea rather than constructed, message-oriented collages.

Steve, "Lawrence is very visually oriented and the concept was his. Just the idea that we are all 'mystified' and can't see what is really going on in the world. So everyone is blindfolded except for the central figure, who is tearing off their blindfold and has a look of horror at the harsh reality of life. We trooped off down to Kings Cross Station with a friend of ours called Googy Pete who was to be the 'Demystified' star. We stood him on some sort of plinth and took the shot. When Lawrence did the artwork, painting the blindfolds on to the crowd, it became apparent that Pete didn't have the right expression on his face. But in the corner of one of the shots was me, making the right sort of face in an effort to will Pete to do it right. So Lawrence got busy with the paste and scissors and put my head on Pete's body. A situation neither of us would have liked in real life."

While the record was greatly underrated, the songs still stand the test of time especially well.



Steve, "Well, there was no peak for me. We never made a record I was really happy with. Our live gigs in Berlin were the experience that has stayed with me more than anything else from the Zounds period. My favorite Zounds record is 'Demystification'."

1982 started with the band still gigging and touring on the continent, not knowing that it would be their final year as a band. The touring motivated the band as well as eventually, like so often is the case, burned them out.

Joseph, "It was fun most of the time. Playing in Holland allowed us to binge out without fear of arrest, which was pleasant. Low points must include a tour of the UK in which the only cassette in the van was the first UB40 album."

The year also started with the release of their third single. *Dancing/True Love* marked the first use of outside instruments on a Zounds record with the addition of keyboards. On "Dancing", they introduce a Brechtian circus bounce that would make Kurt Weil proud.

Steve, "Well, I wrote 'Dancing' on a friend's keyboard. It wasn't even meant to be a Zounds song. Jonathan Barnett from Fuck Off Records asked me to do a solo thing for a tape he was putting out called *Folk In Hell,* which I'm told is quite sought after now.

"When Lawrence and Joseph heard it, they wanted to do it with Zounds and they thought it would be a good single. When we played it live, though, it was very different. More like a kind of Neil Young and Crazy Horse tune. When Geoff Travis of Rough Trade heard us play it at a gig, he was keen for us to do it as a single. We got Brian Pugsley, a friend of ours who lived in our house in Brougham Road, to play keyboards on it. We were keen to develop our musical ideas so we approached it completely differently and got him playing all that nice piano. As he was in the studio with us we thought he might as well play on 'True Love' as well. I have to say Joseph was completely against the whole thing. He was much more of a purist punk than us. We could have carried on churning out 300 mph guitar stuff like 'Subvert', but we were more adventurous than that. I'm not saying we were adventurous in the way Can or Faust were, but we didn't want to be an identikit punk band. 'Dancing' is a very dramatic song, and we wanted to conjure up that dramatic, dark, nightmarish and sad world of living in a fascist state. We wanted it to be Teutonic with a whiff of Berlin Cabaret about it."

"True Love," on the other hand, was an upbeat track with enough detached irony to find its place welding Gang Of Four's "Anthrax" to any of the Buzzcocks' singles going steady. The song was as much a critique of the process as it was a reflection of the protagonist's predicament.

Steve, "As with most of these things, it was a bit of both. It was a difficult time, because we were all intellectually against sexual jealousy and possessiveness, but emotionally we were not very good at handling it. So while there was a lot of sexual freedom and experimentation going on, people were getting very fucked up about it. This coincided with my girlfriend getting pregnant and me having to face up to the fact that I was going to be responsible for another life. I wasn't really mature enough to handle it, and in fact I am still not, and I've got three kids now."

The recording, especially on "Dancing" was especially creative. The openness of that song and its minimal percussion can directly be linked to some of the dub ideas brought in by producer Mikey Dread.

Steve, "It was bizarre because it was going to be produced by Mickey Dread, a Jamaican DJ who was quite well known at the time and worked a lot with The Clash. He hardly ever turned up and when he did he spent the whole time on the phone. I didn't know that many Jamaicans at the time, and I don't think I ever understood a word he said, his accent was so strong. We wanted to build up the drum track by laying one drum at a time so it didn't sound like traditional kit playing. Joseph despised this approach and walked out before we even got to doing 'True Love'. In the end, the drums on 'True Love' were played by a guy called Tim who, at the time, was playing drums for The Mob, he was Mark's sister's boyfriend. He just came down the studio to check it out and ended up playing on it. It was an incestuous little scene at times. I wasn't there for the mix. My girlfriend's pregnancy meant she was under a lot of pressure from her parents to get married. So I did the decent thing any working class boy with my upbringing would do, and ended up getting married on the day we mixed 'True Love'. No wonder I was writing an anti-love song. I don't think Joseph ever got it, it was supposed to be an anti-love song that sounded like a conventional poppy love song."

Not having played on half of the record, Joseph still involved himself with the cover art, drawing of a scene somewhere between a ball and a battle.

Steve, "I love Joseph's drawing. I don't know if he did it especially for the cover or whether I just saw it and thought it was great and really appropriate. We use to give out these posters that Lawrence and I made up by cutting up loads of covers and sticking them back together like a big collage. I ended up with thousands of the posters and I tried to get my kids to use the back of them as drawing paper. The trouble was, my kids were frightened of the picture and wouldn't use them. In the end I threw them all away."

The follow-up single would be their last for Rough Trade. *More Trouble Coming Every Day/Knife* came out that summer, and Joseph calls it his favorite "by a mile."

Oddly enough, this record represents the only documentation of the five-piece lineup. Keeping Brian on as keyboardist, they decided to also keep Tim on as bassist with Joseph back on drum duties. But the mood was already sour.

Steve, "In an attempt to save the band, Joseph suggested we get Tim in to play bass and that I move on to guitar. So we did that, and Tim was promptly sacked by The Mob for being in both bands. And then they asked Joseph to drum for them, it didn't seem to matter that he was now in both bands. Tim was a great drummer though, really powerful, not to take anything away from Joseph, but Tim was a virtuoso musician who was great on loads of instruments. He was not only better than Joseph on drums but he was better than me on bass and better than Lawrence on guitar. He did that one record with us and a couple of tours and then we split up. I never really considered him part of the band, he was just along for the ride. Zounds was just me and Lawrence and Joseph."

"More Trouble" was a great juxtaposition of anguished lyrics with upbeat pop music. The infectious tune mixed with the brood was a great mixture that was reminiscent of the old New York punk scene, especially Television or the Talking Heads. The coarse rhythmic structure and almost funk bass part of "Knife" put that song way ahead of its, time preceding certain musical ideas utilized later, across the ocean by The Minutemen on "Double Nickels".

Steve, "Well, we got Brian to play keyboards on it again and it made it a lot lighter than the way we played it live. I liked the 60's pop feel of it. It's a bit of a clichéd chord sequence, based on quite a common four chord turnaround. We probably did think it was commercial, but we didn't concoct it to be. It was just teenage angst really. I wrote it because I loved the phrase, *More trouble coming everyday.* The line, 'The smell of burning...etc.' refers to the riots that were going on in England's major cities at the time. More knowledgeable listeners would know immediately that I ripped off the title from a Frank Zappa song, which I think is on *Freak Out*, his first album."

"Joseph drew the cover to *More Trouble* as well. I thought it really complemented the song, the scruffy bored teenager. The PR people at Rough Trade hated it. Joseph really should have stuck with the drawing; he's good."

By October of that year, the band was just about done. With one last tour of Europe, they released a final record that had all the signs of a split. A mish-mash of different recordings, the record seems like a last effort to collect some remaining songs.

Steve, "By the time *La Vache Qui Rit* came out I had pretty much lost interest in Zounds. It is undoubtedly our worse record, I wish in some ways it had never come out. Its genesis and history is actually more interesting than the record itself.

"It was put out by a very, very good friend of mine who is a beautiful guy and still a close friend. Originally it was supposed to be a double release with us on one side, and The Mob on the other, and it was supposed to be a benefit record for a draft resistance campaign in Belgium, my favorite country by the way. The Mob was going to do a version of "No Doves Fly Here" in French. That would have been good; Mark always had a lot of style for a farm boy. In fact, as I perform a lot of songs in French myself now I have considered covering it that way.

"Anyway The Mob never got it together and I don't know what ever happened to the draft-resistance angle. We went ahead and did it anyway."

"Biafra" starts the record off on a promising note. Its upbeat and catchy tune again is undermined perfectly by a much more sordid lyrical tale. It could have been seen as advancement on the idea that sparked 'More Trouble".

Steve, "No, sadly the band had lost all direction at that time. We always had a bit of a pop sensibility. It was a fun song to play but I don't think it was so much fun to listen to. It was basically the riff from the Elvis Presley record *His Latest Flame,* married to my synopsis of a short story by one of my favorite authors, Kurt Vonnegut."

"Not Me" follows with a relentless riff that is reminiscent of the opening Coltrane-derived sequence on The Byrds' "Eight Miles High". The noise could easily also be equated with a *White Light, White Heat* outtake.

Steve, "Yes, that is an interesting observation. The riff was one of Lawrence's and I just put lyrics to it. I had never noticed the similarity to 'Eight Miles High' before, but I see what you mean. 'Eight Miles High' is one of my favorite records, and The Byrds are still one of the groups I listen to. I was really in to 1960's psychedelia, in all its forms. A lot of people involved in punk were into that. When Caroline Coon (exmanager of The Clash and founder of Release) said punk was the hippie's revenge I don't think she was far from the truth."

The flipside of the record features an updated version of "Fear" and an old track called "Wolves", both recorded live.

Steve, "It wasn't planned. On our final European tour someone recorded the gig in Leiden in Holland. And the guy who was putting the record out asked if he could put two live tracks on and make it an EP. We just said do what you want. So he did. I was really ill at that point. Just exhausted by everything. We were cold all the time. We were staying in squats with no water, inhabited largely by speed freaks who never slept. The van kept breaking down. The whole Zounds/Mob scene was driven by petty jealousies, conspiracies, and bad blood. I had just about had enough of it all. The song 'Wolves' on that EP was a really old song we had done before Joseph was in the band. Tim, who played bass with us on that last tour, persuaded us to play it. God knows why. I was past caring."

In that kind of atmosphere, it was obvious to all parties involved that there was little remaining interest in the band internally. Burned out by the grind of touring in harsh conditions, it was becoming a drag. The high points of touring at that stage were equaled by the lows.

Joseph, "Cheap and Nasty, from Leiden in Holland, were pretty unforgettable. The Androids of Mu were friends—I think—of Here And Now. I know their drummer, Susie, was one of Here And Now's singers at one point. We also toured with Theater of Hate, which was pretty awful."

Steve, "On that final tour of Europe, Lawrence just said to me one day that he thought it was all a bit of a drag and he and I should do something else that was musically a bit more adventurous and a bit more fulfilling than churning out 'Subvert' for evermore to people who really didn't want to hear anything different. Anarchists can be a conservative lot, I've discovered. Flux Of Pink Indians had the same problem. I went along with Lawrence, and when we got back, we spoke to Joseph and it was clear he didn't want to do the same kinds of things as us and was much happier playing with his old mates from The Mob."

Steve's growing disaffection with the anarcho scene or any of Zounds' audience, for that matter, was also a heavy factor.

Joseph, "Basically, Steve's measured and intelligent approach to anarchism, and life in general, was lost on the anarchos, who didn't understand Zounds at all. I think Steve got fed up with that. My involvement with The Mob was turning me into a bit of a prat as well, and in the end I think we were all relieved when he decided to call it a day."

Steve, "I seemed to be getting older and the audience seemed to be getting younger. The whole Zounds trip had been so exciting and brilliant for me in the beginning but it was becoming a dull routine, and very unpleasant. We never had any money, my girlfriend was having a baby, and I was musically very unsatisfied. I always liked loads of music, pop, country, psychedelia, Krautrock, just loads of stuff. The thing about the punk scene in the beginning was that it had been really open and fresh and interesting. But it had become stagnant and formalized and predictable. I had to move on in my life."

The band finally just ceased one day at the end of 1982.

Steve, "We were supposed to go to a gig in Colchester and none of us could raise the enthusiasm to actually go. We phoned them up and said the band had split up and we were not coming. Our name is still mud in Colchester. There was a bit of a falling out with Joseph after that, but it all got sorted out and I have nothing but respect and admiration for him and loads of fond memories of the times we had together. We still do the occasional gig together, in fact the last time we were on the same bill I sang 'Dancing' with Blyth Power, which was great."

By 1983, the band was completely done. As a last release, Rough Trade encouraged them to license some songs for an Italian-only singles collection. Base Records released the LP, using much of the same dubious practices they've used for years with punk and jazz records.

Steve, "Just after we split. Rough Trade suggested we do it and they arranged the licensing. Joseph refused to have anything to do with it, which is why he is absent from the cover. It was supposed to be limited to 1500 copies, though I know a couple of distributors that took as many as 4000 each. They do things differently in Italy. It goes without saying that we saw no money from it."

At the same time, Steve and Lawrence had started a new band called The World Service. Something of a continuation of Zounds, the band was quick to record for Rough Trade.

Steve, "It was the name of a band that Lawrence and I formed with original Zounds member Nick Godwin. This was immediately after Zounds split up. We released one record called, *Celebration Town,* on Rough Trade. The b-side of that record was fantastic actually, it was called 'Turn Out The Lights' and would probably been the next Zounds single, if we had continued."

But that band soon collapsed, leaving Steve on his own. Before the end of the decade, he had put out two solo records as well as numerous compilation contributions and live appearances. It wasn't until the 90s that Steve played music in a band again, this time with a group called The Relatives.

Steve, "It started off as a drab anonymous indie band, but after a while we went acoustic and became England's greatest-ever country band. We had Eric Mingus (son of jazz legend Charles) on bass for a while. A very beautiful guy."

When that band ended, Steve went back to being a solo artist, though his coming to terms with his musical frustration did allow for him to want to do the reunion gigs in 1998.

Steve, "I've always been artistically unsatisfied. Though what I am doing now is finally getting close to what I want to do. For years I found Zounds cringingly embarrassing, but I have come to terms with it more now."

While a remaining benefit single for the McLibel campaign is still in the works, as well as a possible live record, there's no looking back or nostalgia with Zounds.

Steve, "No, that is it. It would not be possible. I am a different person. I've learned to love Zounds but I can never go there again, it just fucks it up."

"Mind you, our life was like a 24-hour art workshop. When we were not playing, we were painting, writing, clay modeling, making ecologically unsound plastic structures that we would set fire to and pollute our lungs, brains and living environments. People would come round to our house in Oxford and be amazed that every bit of space was covered in paint, paper, clay, and musical instruments. It was such a groovy scene. Our life was our art, but we would never have seen it like that at the time.

"In a lot of ways it was the most exciting time of my life. We just had such great times. It all got a bit much by the end, but generally it was a great time. Essentially I still believe most of the ideas that informed those records. I still am deeply suspicious of capitalism, Christianity and religion, consumerism, the family, the educational system, the whole thing that in my childhood was called the "military industrial complex". I wasn't as good a lyricist then as I am now. But the words had a simple, naive charm and they were from the heart. The music I am less sure about. There are some good moments, but we didn't really have much clue. If you stand it next to Can or Tom Waits or Captain Beefheart or The Byrds or whatever, it doesn't really stand up for me. But it touched a lot of people, so something must have got through. John Lennon said he was never a Beatles fan and I guess I am not a Zounds fan."

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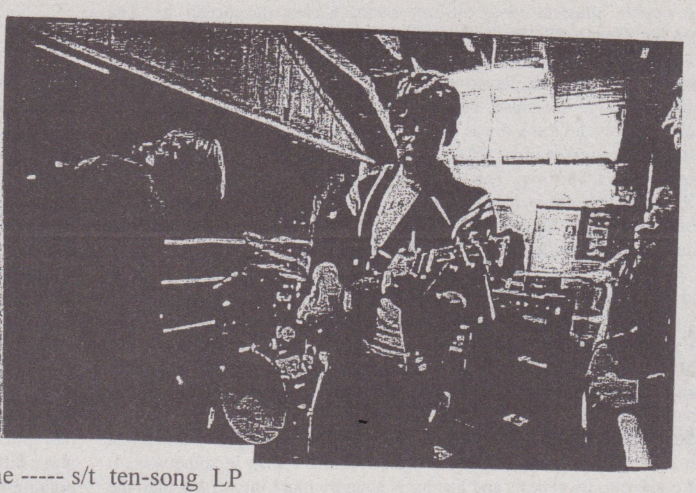

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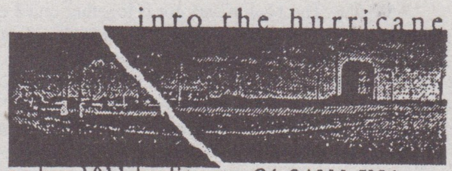

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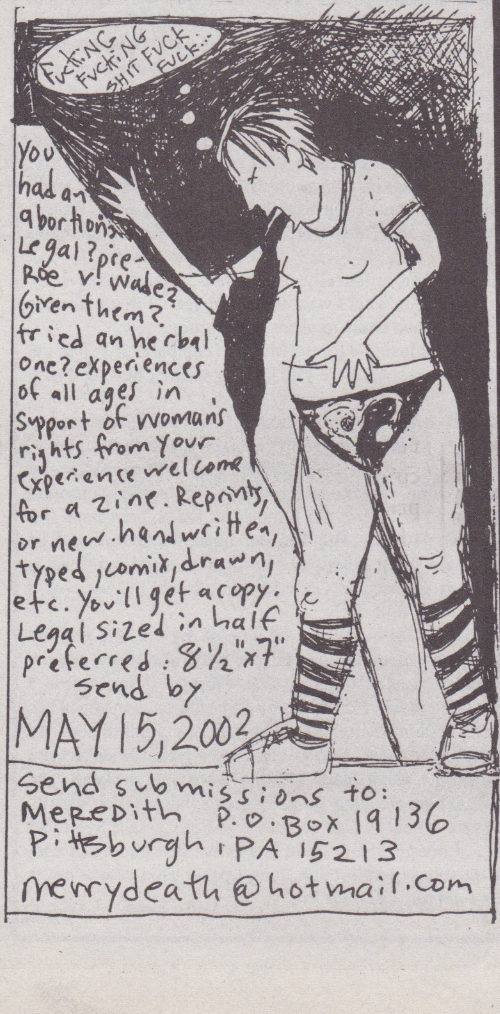

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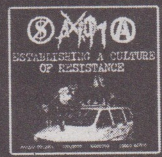

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"SILENCE (OF THE CRAWDAD...)"
TOUR EUROPE
2002

BOOKS

Private Warriors
Ken Silverstein
268 pages • $15.00
Verso Press • 180 Varick Street
New York, NY • 10014

PRIVATE WARRIORS
KEN SILVERSTEIN

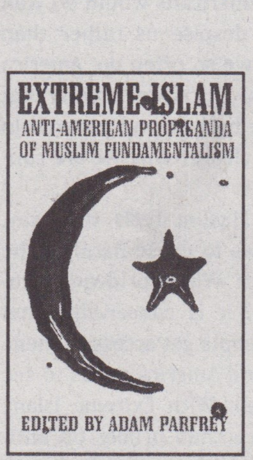
It has been stated by one Jim Hougan, an investigative author dealing with clandestine politics, that there are two sorts of history. One is the safe and clean "Disney version" which surrounds us in the popular lore of Americana—the tales of easy wars and the holy, unblemished nature of American values and politics. The other sort is "...that (which) remains secret, buried and unnamed." This book concerns itself with the latter. In Private Warriors, Ken Silverman lays out very simply and quite neatly the details of one of the most putrid industries which crawls across the earth—private arms sales.

The core nature of the arms industry is detailed in the maintenance of its vested interest in not only a state of constant warfare but also the fabrication of threats to peace and near laughable solutions to those threats (note the ridiculous notion of the Star Wars program for an example). The English band Discharge once wrote with cutting accuracy in the song "Death Dealers" about the nature of this devious industry—how it preys upon so-called "third world" and "developing" nations—pushing them into a position of focusing their budget around bigger and better means of destruction and death as opposed to much-needed humanitarian infrastructure like medical care. Mr. Silverstein lays out information about the likes of neo-fascist Ernst Werner Glatt, a right wing German who for years was the primary gun runner for the Pentagon, Ex-Secretary of State Alexander Haig, who now is a lobbyist for China and also assists in the sale of weapons to Turkey, and Frank Gaffney, a former Pentagon official who has grown wealthy through his promotion of the aforementioned Star Wars program. It is through these tales that we learn the details of this vile industry—and most frighteningly it's often connection to Nazi Germany. Given that a good portion of early Cold War history was designed by one Reinhard Gehlan, spy chief for the Third Reich, and following the war, by the USA, it is no wonder that we find men like Gerhard Mertins, Nazi war hero and friend of Klaus Barbie, involved quite heavily in arms industry. Factoring in the fact that the US is one of the leading arms manufacturers in the world and that among Mr. Mertins' list of governmental clients we find likes of Chile's Pinochet and Iraq's Saddam Hussein, the plot only sickens more.

What is interesting to note, however, would be the secondary nature that these men's politics play to their own sense of greed and need to bend to the ancient god Moloch. A great amount of time is spent not only backstabbing one another, but also playing both sides of the ideological fence—which seems to be more than commonplace. So is the cancerous nature of global capitalism, and while the nature of their particular widget is much more devious than say, the dumping of cheap household goods on developing markets, it is the same game nonetheless.

It is hard to know for certain the sort of changes, if any, that this industry and the players detailed in this expose will undergo in this post-Sept. 11 world. With reignited red-hot cold warriors like Donald Rumsfeld leading the pack of America's new found "Manifest Destiny," i.e., "The War On Terrorism," one could argue that perhaps the horrific human tragedy could be the greatest boost to the arms industry since the start of the Cold War. Given the Bush regime's desired increase in the American military budget (an increase which is 13% greater than current levels and will create a military budget 15% greater than the Cold War average), I feel that many nations (both in the "First" and "Third") will attempt to follow suit—utilizing this new broad-sweeping definition of terrorism and the fighting of such to justify their own increased spending. Terrorism has become the new communism, and men like those whose stories are detailed in this book will only become richer at the expense of the rest of our misery. Excellent and near required reading in these times.
—Michael Thorn

Extreme Islam • Anti-American Propaganda of Muslim Fundamentalism
Adam Parfrey
Feral House • PO Box 13067
Los Angeles, CA • 90013



Feral House has always stood on the cutting edge. Many of their titles have presented extreme and controversial ideas and images. (Apocalypse Culture I and II, Kooks, Lords of Chaos) During this time one thing that has always held true for Feral House books is how even-handed they are in their presentation. The information is offered without bias or judgment. Feral House has always published their books so as to require the reader to think and draw their own conclusions. With Extreme Islam, Adam Parfrey and Feral House have once again published a thought-provoking book filled with an abundance of text that you will most likely never see presented in any mainstream venue.

The timing on the release of this book is perfect. As our president stands in front of the country and presents the thought that Islam is a religion of peace and kindness, Extreme Islam becomes a very important document. After reading just a handful of the texts in this book you may get the sinking feeling that perhaps someone has a different definition of peace than you do. For example, when on page 2, I read how someone can be killed simply for rejecting the Muslim religion, well; doubt begins to creep into my mind on the concept of peace, love, and kindness.

Reading further into the book one gets to see an even more frightening picture being painted. The reader gets a glimpse of the erotic afterlife that awaits the suicide bomber. Other writing includes "You Have Made Me Your Human Bomb," written in a way that seeks to justify suicide bombings. Following that is a very interesting interview with a female hijacker. She relays a first person account of her hijacking and also provides a short interview. An ode to Anthrax is included, lamenting that it has not taken enough American lives. Texts from Usamah Bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, as well as Qaddafi also appear. A frightening primer for preparations for Jihad is included, as are letters of instruction to the hijackers of September 11. A brutal list of Taliban restrictions against women is provided, as are some examples of what happens when one has been perceived to have broken one of those rules.

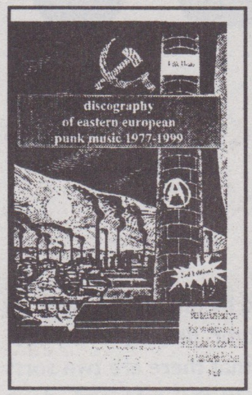
Don't get the idea that this is a one sided presentation either. No, Parfrey has included some equally scary pieces by extreme Zionists, Zionist Christians, as well a disturbing piece from Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam. Also included are pieces on the civil war in Algeria, a Nation of Islam Q & A, an interview with a Russian Fundamentalist, as well as text regarding the genocide of Muslims by the Serbs. To sum it all up, there are over 50 separate pieces of writing in this book and they are not all from a Middle Eastern fundamentalist Muslim's viewpoint. Parfrey knows that presenting only one side of the argument does not make for a challenge or require any thought, with that in mind he tries to provide a good amount of information from the many sides of this situation.

As Parfrey states in his introduction, "the purpose of Extreme Islam is not to harm, but to understand. Understanding requires asking hard questions, and the reading of all relative materials." With that in mind, it is easy to see that Parfrey has done a lot of research on this long planned title. Further along in his introduction Parfrey implores that "Americans would do well to study the arguments of those who despise us rather than parading around in a patriotic haze," as we so often do. America has lost its feeling of invincibility and now it can see clearly that it is hated by many. Parfrey provides the background material in Extreme Islam so that we can see a little clearer why we are considered "The Great Satan."

Granted, I doubt that every Muslim feels this way. However, enough do hold this opinion as to cause harm to the previously unscathed mainland of America. With worldwide communication becoming easier every day, it is conceivable that these extreme ideas will grow as more people get access to them. America bears the brunt of this hatred and America needs to see and understand this information as well. With Extreme Islam, Adam Parfrey has presented a well researched primer on anti-American sentiment that should be required reading for every American in this post September 11 landscape. —Trent Reinsmith

Discography Of Eastern European Punk Music 1977-1999

Lük Haas
220 pages • $6.00
Tin An Men 89 Records • 28 rue da Soultz
67100 Strasbourg • France



Punk is a global phenomenon—the zine you hold in your hand was founded on that fact. Years before internet companies and corporate America were pushing the concept of a global community, punk rockers had already established a worldwide network based upon trading tapes, records, and zines. Music provided the catalyst for thousands of kids—and adults—to make connections with others from all over. It's an absolutely amazing thing. Enter Mr. Haas.

Lük Haas is a man on a mission. While many punks these days scramble over each other to sign contracts, work with PR agents, booking agents, and managers, Lük spends his time scouring the globe looking for punk bands in the far reaches of humanity. Personally, I feel he should be praised a thousand times over for his contributions to the scene such as this book, and for the sheer fact that he releases records from bands in places like Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Turkey.

This book, in particular, is simply amazing—especially if you are a record collector (another principle on which this zine was founded). But even the non-collector scum should find this pretty incredible—while on the surface it seems only to serve as a discography of each Eastern Bloc nation (with various former and current communist states thrown in), it also provides a starting point from which one can begin to construct some sort of scene history. In addition, with the inclusion of hundreds of addresses, you can get in contact with the bands and possibly make connections with the people behind the noise—which is a key part of punk, in my mind.

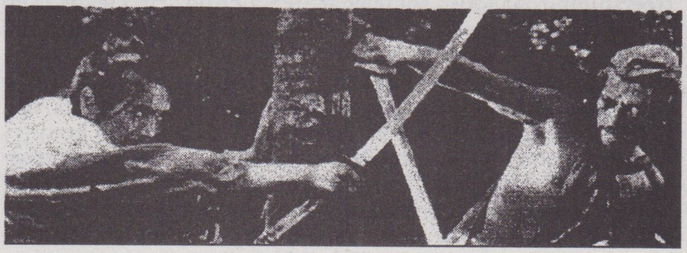
Punk has existed in most of Eastern Europe for almost the same amount of time as its history can be traced in the "Western Democracies." Given the overtly repressive nature of many of these formerly communist states, punk was pushed very underground. To be a punk meant nearly daily confrontations with police and other agents of the state. Also, given the isolated nature of these scenes—many of the bands are very unique and unusual, with differing influences shining through than those present in Western punk. Mr. Haas provides very concise but informative histories of these scenes—and in his brief descriptions of the bands states their importance on the scenes on which they inflict themselves.

While some may write this as a total nerdy collector geek thing, I think more documents like this need to exist. For one, I feel that it is quite important for punx to document their own culture—if we don't, then those who just quite don't get it will. In addition, without such manuscripts, most of the history of these vital, relevant, and thriving scenes will be forgotten. Lastly, it is things like this book which battle against the overtly popular mythology that punk only exists in America and England with a smattering of random punk bands tossed across the world. I truly hope that this book provides a stepping stone for more folks to investigate further into the global nature of punk rock. For the truth remains that punk has always been and shall ever be a global scene.
—Michael Thorn

MOVIES

FINAL CUT

BY STEVEN SPINALI



BURQAS AND BOMBSHELLS

No Man's Land's first frames open into a darkness and fog thicker than any metaphor, a godforsaken slab of rock somewhere on the disputed border between Bosnia and Serbia. It's a no man's land, and given their bumbling guide, it's a miracle this rag-tag band of Bosnian troops didn't end up in the Alps. But with the appearance of sunlight they also find themselves in the middle of reality, on the front lines of the Balkan war, target practice for the well-trained Serb army. The battle's over before the Bosnian troops can load their rifles.

When the noise stops, Serbian command sends two soldiers to check things out. We're left with the nucleus of the story once the smoke clears: an ill-prepared Bosnian hothead Serb Ciki (Branko Djurik) is pointing his rifle at the one surviving Serb, Nino (Rene Bitorajac), who's never even seen the enemy before much less held a rifle. And there's Ciki's friend Cera (Filip Sovagovic), who regains consciousness only to find he's lying on an especailly nasty variety of American-made landmine.

And that's the situation — two mortal enemies at a stalemate no peacekeeping mission can defuse, and third who's dead if he even moves. Writer/director Danis Tanovic couldn't have come up with a better summary for the war in former Yugoslavia if he tried.

Strangely enough, neither Ciki nor Nino recognize they might, aside from outward appearances, be on the same side. Sure, there are the outward differences; Nino is a straight-arrow whose full battle fatigues hide a basic innocence about war, and Ciki's isn't even a uniform — he's come to battle in Levi's and a Stones' t-shirt. But as they talk, they realize they both had the same girlfriend, share the same tastes, and even might be pals if the unreality of the war weren't so pervasive. But like any classic Catch-22 dilemma, any trust they develop is soon interpreted as weakness, and overtures of peace could very well be an invitation for a fatal double cross. Of course, the war isn't as simple as Serb vs. Bosnian. A United Nations UNPROFOR wagon rolls in without authorization, finally giving the peacekeepers a chance to do their job (as opposed to a policy of impotent non-involvement). Headquarters is about to call them back when a Global News Service jeep hops into the fray with a satellite link Now, a small squabble has turned into an international incident watched by millions.

Despite all the mortars and machine-gun fire (not to mention heated invective), this film is eager to show the most troubling irony here: they're fighting over a cold, desolate, battle-scarred, barely arable patch of land that nobody in their right mind would die for. Tanovic's vision of the region is physically unsightly, and with each passing year, increasingly littered with landmines and poisoned earth. But for better (or mostly for worse), this is poisoned earth is home. Besides, this war is as much about settling grudges as any border dispute.

Director Tanocic's pared-down symbology for the conflict may reduce it to its boiler-plate basics, but what details there are get fleshed out with the resourcefulness of theater. Despite its small cast of supporting characters, **No Man's Land** is essentially a three-man play — and superby-writen one at that.

No Man's Land is fundamentally an absurdist parable whose greatest asset is its ability to frame the conflict in simple, well-designed set-pieces. Its ending — which I won't reveal — is particularly insightful, suggesting that despite the age-long hatred between the two sides, the best thing that can be done is sit on the powder keg and no do anything. Of course, this also happens to be the riskiest and most improbable solution, the one that requires true, solitary self-sacrifice for a land one supposedly loves. Like Tanovic's feature, **Kandahar** couldn't possibly be more timely. As the United States contemplates further actions against the Taliban, there's comparatively little known about Afghan culture itself save the more sensationalistic news reports. This film is hardly a documentary, but at least it's a start.

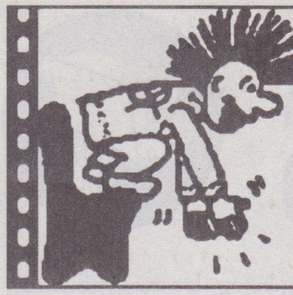
Directed by Mohsen Makhmalbaf, this is a fictional account very much inspired by fact. It's the tale of Nafas (Nelofer Paziza), a beautiful Afghan woman who narrowly escaped to freedom just as her sister was crippled by a landmine. Nafas is profoundly troubled by a recent letter from her sister: deeply demoralized by being physically and emotionally crippled, she promises to commit suicide at the next solar eclipse. That's in three days. (In real life, lead actress Paziza is an Afghan expatriate who has been trying, without success, to reunite with her sister. Although she didn't direct, this is still very much her film.)

After desert bandits steal most everything on their caravan, Nafar must find Kandahar on her own. In addition to having to wear a suffocating burqa in the desert heat, Nafas cannot lawfully travel anywhere without a man posing as her husband or guide. Twelve year-old Khak (Sadou Teymani, a real-life orphan of the war who supports his entire family) turns out to be a convenient escort — that is, until it becomes clear he's squeezing Nafas for every dollar he can get. He even tries to get her to buy a ring he recently pulled from a dead body.

At the local hospital, she meets Tabib Sahib (Hassan Tastar), a black American doctor of sorts who came to the Afghanistan to resist the Soviets. He now assumes a new mission as healer. He can take her only so far, but no matter how anyone tries to get Nafas to her destination, there's almost a palpable force that resists her best efforts. The city of Kandahar become something like a fallen Xanadu — never quite accessible, almost a like a mirage. In a Taliban-controlled culture where even a woman's windows must be painted over to maintain propriety, Nafas cannot hope for an easy deliverance. Her impotence in the Afghan culture is the very reason her sister wants to commit suicide. As a result of havins mostly non-actors in starring roles, **Kandahar** feels awkward in nearly every scene. (Many of the sequences have English dialog, so the fault is hard to avoid.) This isn't to say that it's an amateurish effort. The spare, elegant storyline has the same rustic artfulness as your better Iranian films, expressing wider worlds through repetition and keynote sequences. When the Red Cross air-drops artificial legs by parachute, a crowd of hobbling men rush from the field hospital in a panic; the loss of legs from landmines is endemic. Like Nafas and most everyone else, their lives are crippled by other people's war. Every aspect of their lives is crippled.

It's ironic that **No Man's Land** is the kind of film that could be adapted to several different media, while Kandahar is misplaced in its own. It's a feature film that would have been infinitely more convincing and moving as a documentary.

Feedback at my website: http//home.earthlink.net/~sspinali/



BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

I'M GONNA KILL THE NEXT PERSON WHO SAYS THAT TO ME

Everyone has his or her own idea of how punk started. The English think they invented it. New Yorkers think they introduced heroin. DC kids think they created hardcore. My version centers on the East Coast (at least until I moved to San Francisco). Everyone personalizes his or her version of the history of punk, but I can't believe that anyone would accept **Rage: 20 Years of Punk Rock West Coast Style** as being even remotely representative.

Rage: 20 Years of Punk Rock West Coast Style doesn't tell you anything about West Coast punk. There are interviews with Jello Biafra (Dead Kennedys), Keith Morris (Black Flag, Circle Jerks), Don Bolles (Germs), Gitane Demone (Christian Death), Jack Grisham (TSOL) and Duane Peters (U.S. Bombs, The Hunns); people who were there back in the day and most are still playing music. This is not exactly my ideal cross-reference of characters, but I could give them the benefit of the doubt, if they had something interesting to say. All the interviewees talk about is how hard it was to be a punk back then. Jack Grisham focuses on his reputation for violence and how now he is a normal husband and father. There are no music-related stories about what happened back then or what is happening now. I had just finished reading *We've Got The Neutron Bomb: the Untold Story of LA Punk*, which my friends from LA tell me isn't at all accurate. At least, with the book the punks are telling stories and you get a picture of what things were like. There is a sense of the development of something even though the book focuses on about five bands.

There is very little performance footage. There are some short clips of the Screamers, Germs and Dead Kennedys. The majority of the film is static talking heads intercut with graphics leading from shot to shot. This is an obvious oversight. The other is the extremely small scope of coverage. There are so many influential bands that are completely overlooked. The scope is very limited to the early days with no representation of '80s, '90s or current bands.

Filmmakers Michael Bishop and Scott Jacoby were overly ambitious in titling this documentary **Rage: 20 Years of Punk Rock West Coast Style**. I'm sure there were plenty of obstacles to getting interviews and footage of bigger name punk stars. I see it happening every day. I know bands that are trying to accumulate video footage and live recordings of themselves, but the owners of the tapes want to charge the bands large sums to use their stuff. On the flipside, people have to be protective of things to avoid getting rip-offed. You'd think punks would be more willing to share and help preserve the scene. Maybe (hopefully) someone is working on a more in-depth documentary.

As an added reason to doubt the intentions of this film, the DVD version has an interview with Michael Bishop and Scott Jacoby where they discuss their experience making the film. All they can say is how inspiring the people they interviewed are. All I can think is that footage must have been left out. I wasn't inspired nor could I pay attention for the whole hour this whole thing took.

Maybe I was misleading myself in thinking there was any sort of reality to punk history. I enjoy getting as far away from reality as possible, which is why I can't stop recommending **Otesanek** (Little Otik) to people. Here, I am absorbed into a world I will never expect myself to be involved with, parenthood and man-eating trees.

Otesanek is a Czech film by Jan Svankmajer based on a fairy tale. Karel and Bozena are a happily married couple who cannot conceive. Their neighbors pity them, especially an eight-year-old girl Alzbetka who lives next door. Alzbetka's parents invite Karel and Bozena to the country for a weekend. The couple enjoys their stay and decides to buy the house next door. While fixing up the yard, Karel pulls out a tree stump that looks somewhat like a child. He cleans it up and gives it to Bozena as a gift. Unexpectedly, she begins to act like it is really a baby.

Karel finds it amusing until Bozena wants to bring the baby back to the city. Nervous about what others will think, he convinces her to leave the stump at the country home. Bozena go through withdrawal and devises a plan, pretending to be pregnant so that she can bring the baby home. She pulls it off with everyone except the noisy and intuitive Alzbetka who asks if she can feel the baby kick. Alzbetka comes across as the person with the most common sense during the first half of the film. Adults seem crazed by their obsession with childbirth. It being so important that you has to invent a baby to fill some gap in your life. I have not yet experienced my own clock ticking, nor do I ever expect to, so this need to procreate is extremely humorous.

It only gets better when the tree stump-baby comes to life and grows to big for baby formula and starts to demand food. The creature eats constantly, exhausting the two parents who are trying to keep up with it. Bozena seems like a crazed, over protective parent so the other neighbors steer clear whenever she comes around. Alzbetka is eventually able to get close enough to the baby to discover the secret.

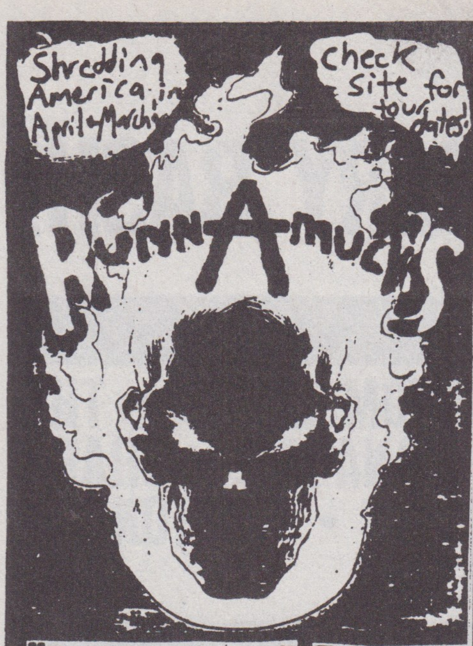
Alzbetka then digs out a book of fairy tales revealing the Otesanek. She reads how it goes from town to town eating everybody in sight. Then the mail carrier disappears. Then a social worker. The book serves as a nice set up for what is happening and confusing reality with fantasy, but goes too far and gives away the entire story before the film is able to play it out. Even still, **Otesanek** is a great laugh out loud, absurdist film.

I can relate to **Otesanek**. Who wouldn't want to kill everyone in sight, not for food,but just because they are bugging you? That's what **Charm** asks and answers. San Francisco filmmakers Sadie Shaw and Sarah Reed let you vicariously run wild in their film.

Charm starts out simply and sometimes frustratingly with the basic everyday activities of Rosie. Rosie is a regular person with the usual problems: family drives her crazy, friends are too demanding and men are just plain annoying. Rosie smiles her way through it all and shows her cousins her graduation pictures even though she knows they don't care. The scene with the family at dinner is way too long, the acting seems forced and the edits are loose. I wonder if this was on purpose. The awkwardness and the mind wandering seem to make the payoff later all the more worthwhile.

Then something in Rosie snaps and she no longer wants to put up with it so she starts to kill. First, it's the guy who was whistling at her, later her best friend. The murder scenes are low budget, but brutal enough. Killing a man at a diner counter and then running away with blood on your hands and no thought as to who may have seen you is my dream.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send me a copy c/o MRR PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. I now have e-mail if you want to get in touch carolynmrr@juno.com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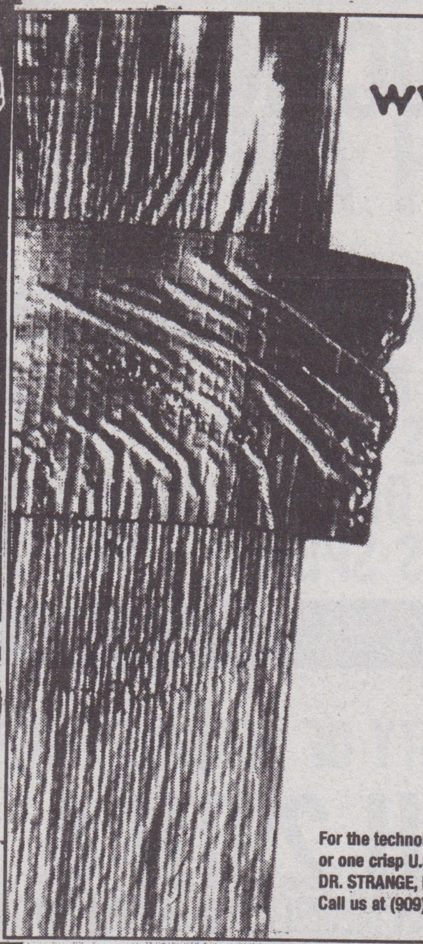

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OUT DEC/JAN/FEB

HHH - 2xCD Discography (repress)
The complete collection of this Spanish thrashcore band. One of my favorites.

CRUCIAL ATTACK - Debut EP
Raw as fuck SXE HC from Reno. No polish here....pissed off and punk.

BG - Debut EP
500 press run of ex-BURNED UP BLED DRY guys playing grinding German style HC.

ExTxA - We're not the...CD
Collection of the first LP, debut EP and comp tracks/unreleased. Fierce Swedish HC.

BREAKFAST - Eat Rice EP
The 2nd EP by Tokyo skate-thrash kings. Recorded like new EXCLAIM stuff...ripping.

DOWN IN FLAMES - LP/CD
Debut LP of high energy thrash from kids who are half your age. CD has extra.

IRON LUNG - EP
Two man grindcore attack. Crazy time changes & off chords at 1000mph

SCHOLASTIC DETH - Revenge EP
7 new fast HC songs about skating, books and the joys of being a nerd. Lets GO!

DISCARGA - LP/CD
Ultra fast political HC from Brazil...like MANLIFTINGBANNER. Collection of sorts.

V/A - Barbaric Thrash Vol III CD+EP
Shitloads of new thrash bands from all over the world plus a crazed ASOCIAL demo EP.

LIE - Why EP
LIE return to their no-BS fast thrash roots. 4 new ones for the west coast tour.

REAGAN SS - EP
Pissed LA hardcore....flex your fucking head!

QUATTRO STAGIONE - Debut EP
Crazed German grindcore....like HE WHO CORRUPTS. Drummer is smoking mad crack.

YOUTH ENRAGE - MCD
Crazed fast core from Sapporo! Third outing..includes CD-Rom video of 2 shows.

Ebullition distro's 625 shirts as well. Check either website

6X2X5 thrashcore

EPS STILL AVAILABLE:

THE REAL ENEMY - EP
Positive, political and fast youth crew from Minneapolis. Their last record

FACE OF CHANGE-1990 Demo 2xEP
Combo of raw HC and melody not unlike early 7 SECONDS and UNIFORM CHOICE. 90 demo.

JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS - Debut EP
1000 more of this now legendary band. Osaka's version of early GANG GREEN.

SCHOLASTIC DETH - Debut EP
Fast skate-thrash that is inspired by HERESY and HENSLEY. 6 songs in 6 minutes.

EDORA - Debut EP
Ripping fast thrash/grind from Singapore. FxOxB meets POWER OF IDEA

POINT OF FEW - EP
Political, powerful Dutch hardcore that mixes thrash and modern HC styles

BREAKFAST - Debut EP
Debut of Tokyo skate thrash. Mix SST with manic and fierce thrash!

JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS/EXCLAIM split EP
For their West Coast tour, unbelieveable fast thrash. Prepare to be pummeled.

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GREENHELL: www.greenhell.de
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LPS/CDS STILL AVAILABLE:

RAMBO - Wall of Death LP/CD
Mix FINAL EXIT (Swe) and PROJECT X, throw in some fatigues and a huge mosh pit and you have fucking RAMBO. Cd-rom video too!

IMMORTAL FATE - Beautiful LP
Brutal, guttural grindcore not unlike the first INCANTATION LP. Pre-NO LESS members.

REAL REGGAE - MAZE + THC CD
Guitar heavy thrashcore from Osaka Japan. Compiles Eps, comps and the Maze CD on MCR!

V/A - Murderous Grind Attack CD
An American/Japanese 17 band CD comp of brutal, DIY grindcore. Not for math-metal wimps, this is as raw as it gets.

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS - LP
Insane hardcore that is like a mix between BLAST! and MAN IS THE BASTARD (I swear).

LIE - LP / CD
LIE continue with their fierce thrash and throw in some snotty punk to boot

GORDON SOLIE MOFOs 10"LP
Finally back in print, definitive Midwest pissed-off hardcore/punk.

DUMBSTRUCK - LP
Ex-RIPCORD playing some rough and raw Scandanavian inspired hardcore

HIGHSCORE - Discography CD
Super fast youth crew from Germany. Contains the LP, EP, comp tracks and demo

PLUTOCRACY - Dankstahz CD
Collection spanning 89-93. Out of control grindcore, splits, LP, live, etc.

LIFES HALT/WxHxN - Split LP/CD
Been in the works for years, finally happening in support of the US Summer Tour!

WxHxN - The Second Year CD
The 6", Japan Tour Ep, and the 'Ahora Mas Que Nunca' EP, plus some other surprises!

SPAZZ - Sweatin II CD
The first LP, split CD w/SUBVERSION and live radio show. Full 60 minutes.

AVULSION - CD
Super crazed grindcore from Buffalo

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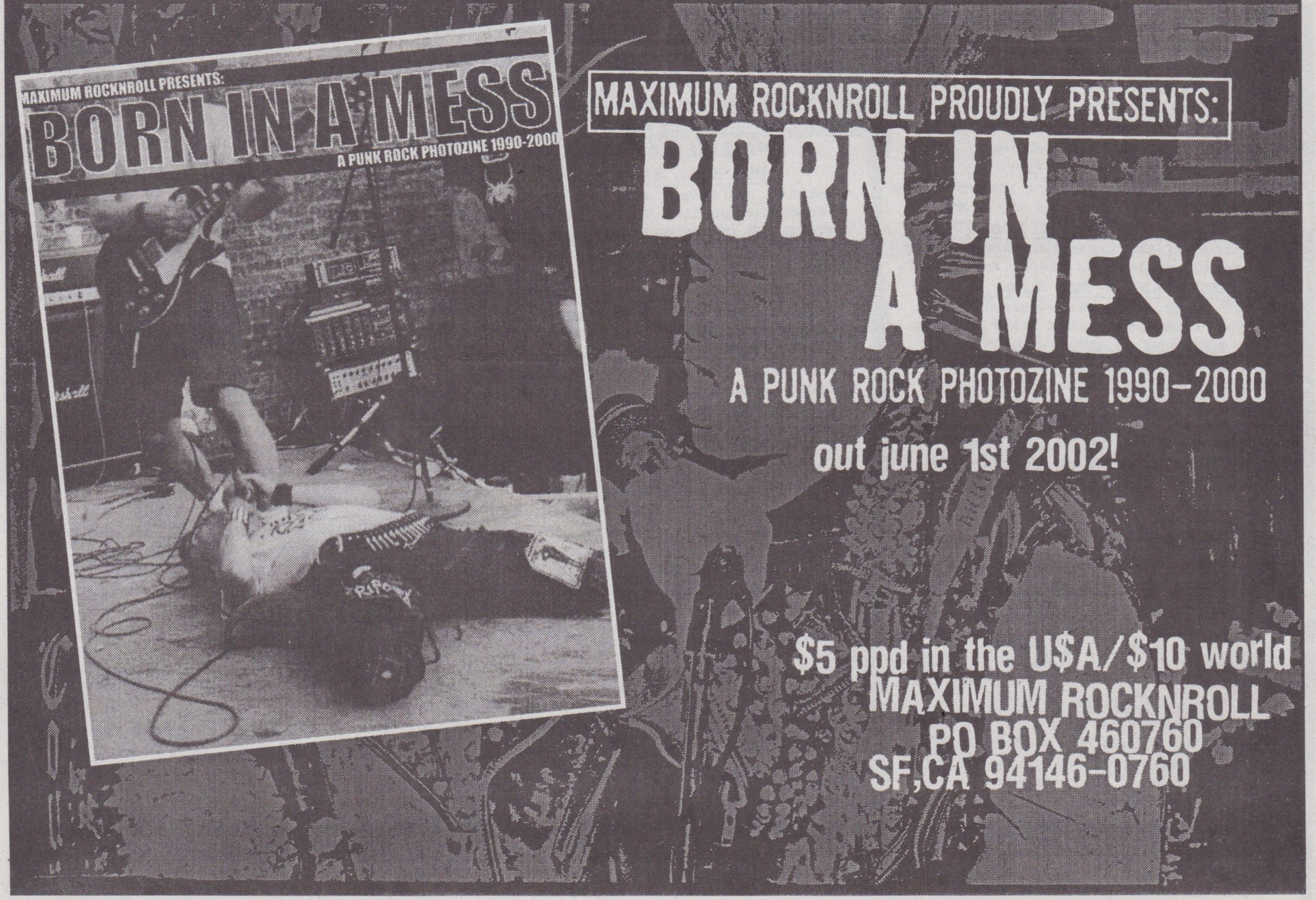
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theDIALTONES
theALLEY'GATORS

THE ADVERTS - "Crossing the Red Sea with the Adverts" LP

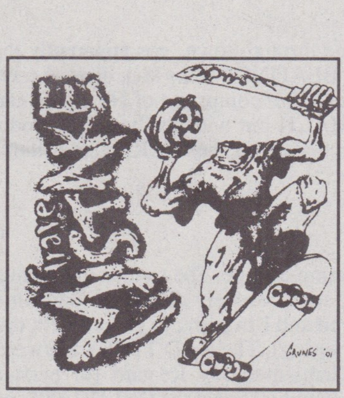
A repressing of the 1977 record, originally released on Bright Records. I have no idea what label put this re-release out because there is no mention of it.but who cares. The cover is the same as the original, except for a ridiculous "Punk" label with a safety pin in the upper right hand corner of the cover... (For those who don't realize what this is). Anyway, this is the classic first album from the ADVERTS. This is tough rock 'n' roll, early punk/new wave with great driving bass, awesome vocal melodies, in the same vein as the BUZZCOCKS or the STRANGLERS. Includes my favorite hit "Gary Gilmore's Eyes." (JT)

(no address)

AGGRESSIVE DOGS - "We Never Trade" LP

This is straight up NY style hardcore from Japan. SKARHEAD and MADBALL influences abound here. They occasionally move away from the mid-tempo rhythmic stuff and pick things up with some speed and aggression. The vocals are a forced and slightly screechy. Overall this is a fairly solid release. I did notice that the recording is from 1998, which leaves me wondering if this has been out for quite some time. Regardless, track it down if this sounds like your thing. (RC)

(Stompin Ground, c/o Aggressive Dogs, 4F Hatsudai-A1 Bldg 1-2-4 Honmachi, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 151-0071, JAPAN)



ALLEYGATORS/DIALTONES - split EP

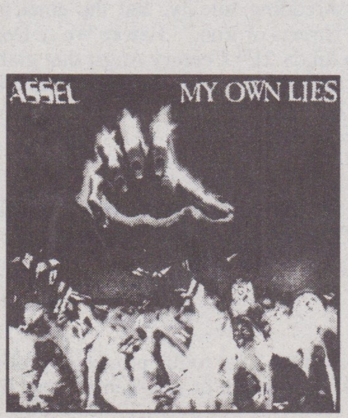
The DIALTONES play punked out garage rock. For the first I see (barely) why some people insist these guys sound like DEVIL DOGS. "Bad News" is fast, short and very catchy. "Knife Manual" is such a great song. No one could ever do a bad version of it. The ALLEY 'GATORS are a bit faster, but very similar. The singer always sounds like he's going to run out of breath, but never does. Wow. (CK)

(Desert Inn, via Dotti 49, 31100 Treviso, ITALY, desertinn@tvol.it)

ANTI-ANTI/GRAVE MISTAKE - split EP

ANTI-ANTI is pretty straight forward pop punk: ALL/DESCENDENTS style bass lines, DOUGH BOYS vocal harmonies, and an over all early Lookout! era GREEN DAY feel. Sounds good to me....god fellas please stay away from the path that leads to BLINK 182-dom. (Please turn the record over now). Alright, I'm pretty sure GRAVE MISTAKE loves THE MISFITS, but when it comes down to it, who doesn't honestly dig THE MISFITS. The second song "Mars Needs Cheerleaders" seems to be their own rendition of THE MISFITS "I turned into a Martian." OK, I don't mean to totally pigeon hole the band—here's a more broad description they sound as whole like TOKEN ENTRY, SCREECHING WEASEL, and THE MISFITS. Thumbs up and added bonus points for the headless sword yielding skate punk on the cover!(AS)

(Say-Ten, GraveMistakes@hotmail.com)



ANODE - 2xEP

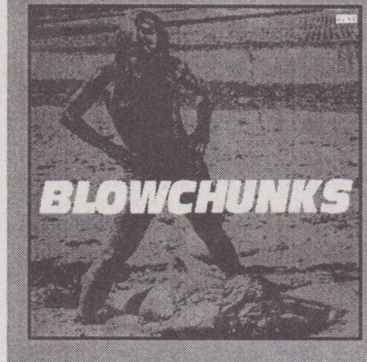
Two records with an odd mix of chaotic hardcore and emo breakdowns that seem to come and go at random. Most of the songs are fast with vocals that sound like they are being forced out of the guys scratchy throat. The guitars are heavily distorted and the drums get somewhat lost in the mix but it still seems to work out. These may be best described as a mixture of the two styles of emo that were around California in the early '90s. On the one hand you have your San Diego bands like HEROIN and on the other you have stuff like EMBASSY. (PA)

(Dan-Doh, Honmachi 2-1-21, Palms BLD BF, Kochi City, 780-0870, Japan, anode@themis.ocn.ne.jp)

AVULSION
Prince of a Thousand Enemies

BG
the congratulations

BLACK MARKET FETUS
MURDER MACHINES



APERS -"Eye Wide Open" CD

A three song EP from this NETHERLANDS band with their RAMONES-esque sound. One LP track, an ok cover of the UNDERTONES "Here Comes The Summer" and another non-LP track. Good but not their best. Mostly for APERS completists if there is such a thing. (RL)
(Stardumb, PO Box 21145, 3001 AC Rotterdam, THE NETHERLANDS, www.stardumbrecords.com)

ARMED WITH INTELLIGENCE - "What May Seem Dumb to You is Pounding in My Heart" EP

This band used to be called IT TAKES ALL KINDS. Here are twelve fast DIY punk rock tunes with yelled female vocals. "Girl" is a good one about punk girls standing up for themselves in their community. This is all right. (SR)
(A.W.I., PO Box 30748, Rochester, NY 14603)

ASSEL/MY OWN LIES - split EP

Top notch split here. ASSEL, hailing from Sweden, combine crazed blast beat mayhem *a la* HELLNATION with semi-anthemic straight-forward thrash. All four songs are pretty well thought out with plenty of parts and lots of transitions, yet the songs still retain character. Germany's MY OWN LIES sounds remarkably similar. In fact, I could be easily fooled into thinking that this is a single band release. MY OWN LIES follow almost the exact same formula, but with a little more emphasis on technical time-changes rather than ferocious blast parts. Recommended. (SP)
(Flowerviolence, Kapellenstrasse 16, 69469 Weinheim, GERMANY, www.flowerviolence.de)

THE AVOIDED - "You and Me" 12"

This 12" by the Japanese foursome the AVOIDED is an uneven hippie-rock release. The quizzical vocals, minimalistic drumming, and sparse 60s-style guitar remind one more of MOBY GRAPE than punk rock. Why is Maximum reviewing this kind of crap? I don't fucking know! If you are a BILLY CHILDISH fan with no life or need something quirky until the next lackluster REGISTRATORS LP comes out on Rip Off Records, than maybe this will work for you. To summarize briefly: boring! (BR)
(Avoided)

AVULSION - "Prince of a Thousand Enemies" EP

Jesus, this EP just crushes! Insane grind/HC from Buffalo, NY with all the fixings: hectic blast beats, crazy time changes, dual vocal attack, and great production to boot! Many bands who have the hi/lo, cookie monster/chicken squawk interchange don't really pull it off right, but AVULSION has their shit well planned for maximum craziness. Fans of bands like ASSUCK, BRUTAL TRUTH, or any good chaotic grind band take note. (SP)
(Impatience or Indifference, c/o Elliott Lange, 3201 3rd St. 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94124, bidmerise@hotmail.com)

BG - "The Congratulations" EP

I'm bummed I missed these guys when they came through town 'cos apparently they leveled the place, ex BURNED UP BLED DRY/RASH OF BEATINGS folks kick down 6 tracks that wouldn't have sounded out of place on those old *Squat Or Rot* comps out of NY in the early '90s. Metallic, discordant thrash that sounds like RORSCHACH but with really rough production. They finish up with a blazing DICKS cover...any band that cover the DICKS gets a thumbs up from me! (TB)
(625, 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413)

BAD TIMES - LP

Early morning walks past drunks fighting over chump change. The sounds of late night arguments, gunfire, and police sirens. Work-related stress, social anxiety disorders. Bad times. The perfect soundtrack for the first quarter of 2002 has arrived and I'm going to greet it with open arms because it all feels and sounds so very, very right (or wrong). The BAD TIMES are/were a one-off gutter-blues combo that consisted of Southern Gentlemen Jay Reatard (of personal favorites the REATARDS), Eric Oblivian, formerly 1/3 or Memphis' finest the OBLIVIANS, and King Louie Bankston. The music's captured in speaker-shredding fidelity, and the emotions expressed are raw, livid, and real, as last night's hangover. "Streets of Iron," "Before We're Dead & Gone," and "Trapped in the City" are all redolent of the kinda 21st Century Angst that grabs, shakes and won't let go. Fast and slow, dumb and clever, and played with utter, desperate conviction. Recommended uneasy listening for OG OBLIVIANS fans. (JH)
(Goner/Therapeutic, PO Box 40566, Memphis, TN 381740-0556)

BLACK MARKET FETUS - "Murder Machines" EP

Brutal grinding mayhem like a lo-fi DESTROY, with a slight tinge of black metal flavoring. Too metal for me, especially the solos, but those of you who are down for the cause will eat this up like candy. (MT)
(Ratgut/Fetusface, eric138@msn.com)

BLOW CHUNKS - "Like Me" EP

Aw crap, don't tell me that ultra lo-fi trend has returned. That rotten production sound that TEENGENERATE was so very fond of but never did them justice or represented their live

sound at all. Well, this is one of few records I've heard recently with that "in a metal trash can rolling down the street" sound. I was never cool enough to truly distinguish whether a band had great qualities when they chose to produce like shit (there, I said it!), so I'll have to leave you with only the facts. Garage rock. German. First release on the label. Fine. (RY)
(Sonico, PO Box 1244 26582 Aurich, GERMANY)

BOMBSITE BOYS - "Top Hits" EP

A good power pop combo here. Two strong originals, but a cover of the great PRODUCERS song "She Sheila" falls a little flat due to some flat vocals. But the fact that they even covered the pop classic in the first place earns them my respect. The two originals are not far from later HUSKER DU type pop. Possibly a great band in the making. Pop fans take note on this limited release. (RL)
($3 ppd: Myopic, 8 Ridgewood Pl, CT 06606)

BONECRUSHER - "Working for Nothing" LP

Veterans BONECRUSHER's follow-up album combines the elements you're used to-slashing powerchord guitars, sing-along choruses, and a "fuck you" attitude you don't wanna argue with. I have to confess that this does bring back memories of the early-80s British street bands in more than a few ways (particularly the lyrics), but this is a powerful outing with kick-ass production that just doesn't let up. Their rockin' cover of CHELSEA's "Right to Work" blows the original to pieces-the highlight of the record. (SS)
(Knock Out, Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY)

BONECRUSHER - "For Your Freedom" EP

Straight out of hell and into your house! Raybo and BONECRUSHER come into that paltry little existence you call a life and blow away all the rules! This new EP on 77 RPM Records is further proof that BONECRUSHER is THE dominant band in Orange County, California. These four tunes recorded last year at George's House give off an urgency very few bands can touch. BONECRUSHER starts the ass kicking with one of the best anthems of the last few years: "Gotta Believe." Raybo's vocals are blood curdling. The guitars hammer on your head. Very strong medicine! Song two is "Freedom" and BONECRUSHER askes "What You Gonna Do, For Freedom." Side two of this "American Punk Rock n' Roll" EP features "It's Up to You" and this song is another instant classic from BONECRUSHER. No other band delivers such a hard sound with take-no-prisoners attitude and still produces songs so hook-laden and imminently listenable. BONECRUSHER is number one! (BR)
(77 RPM, PO Box 9186, Glendale, CA 91226, www.77rpmrecords.com)

BORN AS A JOKE - "No Pipes, No Horns..." EP

Mid-tempo German punk sung in English. It has silly vocals on the first track that slightly annoy, the second track veers into hardcore territory, the silly voice is back on track three. This isn't very good. (AD)
(Christopher Lampert, Unterm Ratskopf 58, 38855 Weinigerode, GERMANY)

BORN DEAD ICONS - "New Scream Industry" 10"

Modern hoarse-shout hardcore of a churning-to-chum style. Never thrash, and metallic in a '70s way, not 80s crossover (no solos, just the bass-heavy BLACK SABBATH patented rumble). This reminds me of the mid-'90s hardcore style before the return of the SUICIDAL generation. Average. (RW)
(Stonehenge, Chemin d'etais, 21400 Puits, FRANCE, www.stonehengerecords.com)

BORN DEAD ICONS - "New Scream Industry" 10"

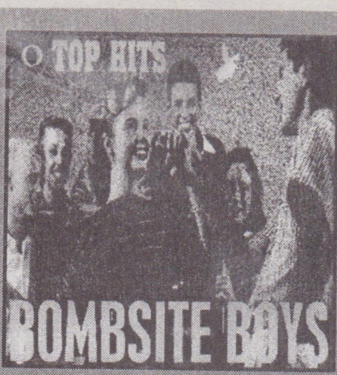
While this record (which contains their demo) isn't as much an essential listen as their last LP and their recent masterful EP, I'd say it's far from average. Unique in a hardcore world of "bandanas" and "thrash," BORN DEAD ICONS actually takes the time to write songs-instead of just going after a sound. Driving, riff heavy punk with nods to AMEBIX and MOTORHEAD. (MT)
(Stonehenge, Chemin d'etais, 21400 Puits, FRANCE, www.stonehengerecords.com)

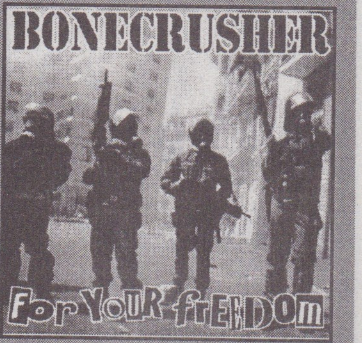
THE BUFF MEDWAYS - "Into Your Dreams/ Highway Chile"

I just love the BUFF MEDWAYS. It's just so sweetly enjoyable. I don't know if it's all the love songs or if it's the obsession with covering JIMI HENDRIX (that doesn't really make sense to me, except that they really don't end up sounding like Jimi Hendrix songs). BILLY CHILDISH seems to have broken his mold while maintaining his basic style. After all, once you hear the vocals you immediately know it's him. Fantastic. (CK)
(Vinyl Japan, Hamada Bldg. 1F 4-7, 7-Chome, Nishi Shinjuku, Shinjuku-Ku, Tokyo, Japan, office@vinyljapan.com)

THE CABLE CAR THEORY - "The Deconstruction" CD

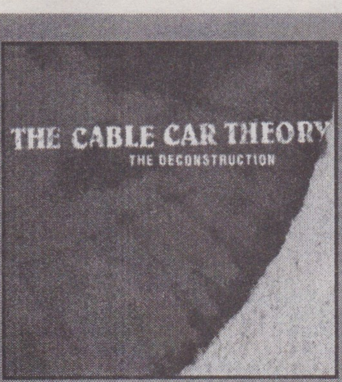
This band sounds like many of the hardcore bands that Revelation has put out lately. The music is a mix of hardcore and emo with some metal elements in it but at the same time it is poppy and catchy. The vocals are half screamy and half sung but even the screamy parts sound very clean. The recording is so clean that it takes some of the edge off of what could be driving songs. The hardcore songs are much better than the slow emo ones and luckily there are enough of them to keep the record interesting. (PA)
($10 ppd, Immigrant Sun, P.O. Box 150711, Brooklyn, NY 11215, www.immigrantsun.com)



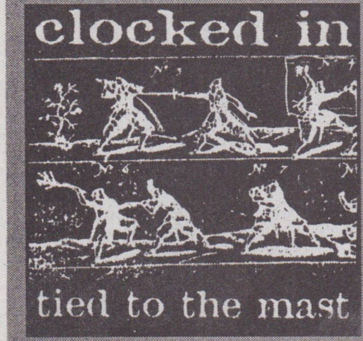


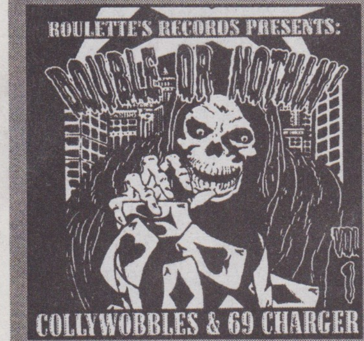
BORN A JOKE
NO PIPES, NO HORNS,

The Buff Medways
Into Your Dreams



CIRIL
HUNTINGTON CLIFFS





CATHOLIC BOYS / KILL-A-WATTS - split EP

Now this is punk rock. Punk fucking rock. A split EP worth staying up late for, that's what you've got here. CATHOLIC BOYS spit out two tracks that grab you by the balls and just don't let go. Not only do the songs rock, but they are delivered with an attitude that just plain rules. Faster paced punk 'n' roll that's heavy on the punk. I hate to assign labels, but if you're a fan of the stuff put out on Rip Off, you're in for a treat. They should have preceded the first cut with a little announcement-"We're the CATHOLIC BOYS and we're about to play two songs. If you don't like them, fuck off." Wow, KILL-A-WATTS don't let up either. Again, you've got faster paced punk 'n' roll that is somehow compelling. The male/female competing vocals is always a plus in my book. HIGHEST RECOMMENDATION. (KK)

(Electrorock, PO Box 13504, Wauwatosa, WI, 53213-0504)

CHARM CITY SUICIDES- "The Worst Rise and Shine" EP

Dirty lo-fi garage punk with snotty boy vox. This is super trashy and screeching. The slower songs remind me of "Blister in the Sun" by VIOLENT FEMMES. (JT)

(Vermin Scum, no address)

CHILDREN IN HEAT - "Black and White and Red All Over" CD

"But officer, I did give it a chance, really I did!" Damn—this is awful. In the interests of fairness, I searched for something redeeming-y'know- constructive criticism. I'll be damned if I could find much there. Guess the music is okay, but merely okay—nothing that left me with any impression at all. Really, it comes down to the vocals. The sorry truth-some people simply can't sing. That's why so many people scream and carry on in punk rock! Leave the singing to "rock" bands who care about that! This is unlistenable. I simply gave up when "Everything is All Right" came on-once you go mellow with the music, and have those vocals, I'm outta here. (TM)

(R.U.T., 8973 Read Road, Corfu, NY 14036)

CIRIL - "Huntington Cliffs" EP

Once you get past the dreadful piano intro this EP ain't half bad. 4 tracks of heavily RUDIMENTARY PENI inspired punk rock. When the band stick to the straight ahead like on "Oppress the Oppressor" I'm totally into it, but when they start tinkering with "creepy" spoken word over guitar noodling (like later PENI) I'm reaching for the needle. Like the music the lyrics are half and half, one part anarcho, one part creepy introspective. Stick with the punkers and I'm with ya guys! (TB)

(Headline, 7708 Melrose Ave, LA, CA 90046)

CLOCKED IN - "Tied to the Mast" CD

Tough loud hardcore punk from Atlanta. Reminds me of a faster BONECRUSHER or BILLY CLUB mixed with a healthy dose of New York style aggression. Solid shit. (AD)

(Radical, no address)

CLONE DEFECTS - "Blood on Jupiter" LP

It's about time the world got a LP from these kids. Garagey glam with a whole lot of attitude. The vocals are drenched in reverb and disaffection. The music slugs along with absolutely no concern for my ears and I don't mind one bit. (CK)

(Tom Perkins Entertainment, PO Box 970936, Ypsilanti, MI 48197)

COLLYWOBBLES/69 CHARGER - split EP

A split EP from two Dutch bands that's got its moments, but doesn't leave me feeling like I have to own it. COLLYWOBBLES play faster paced punk rock that's got elements of early British Hardcore, elements of heavy metal and in a catchy little package. 69 CHARGER play a similar style, though they definitely are much heavier with the metal influence. The music is faster paced, with enough guitar licks to satisfy even a total metal head and the throaty vocals that some people just can't get enough of. One of the guys is wearing a HOOKERS t-shirt in the band photo, so it's not difficult to see the influence. (KK)

(Roulette's, Lijsterstraat 32, 5735 ET Aarle-Rixtel, NETHERLANDS)

CONATION - "The Dichotomy of Earth and the Human Race" CD

CONATION from Australia mixes things up with some sharp choppy emo tinged hardcore that goes through lots of tempo and style changes. One moment they are going full tilt with hammering blasts, and the next it is so quiet that you could hear a pin drop. The problem occurs when the songs slide into those "passionate" and "quiet" moments where everything mellows out and occasionally the vocalist starts singing instead of screaming. I don't mind the mellow moments, but I never have really cared for that vocal style in hardcore and besides the guy doesn't sing very well and should stick to screaming. With that said this is actually a very strong release and I highly recommend it. (RC)

(Deplorable Recordings, PO Box 191, Balmain, NSW 2041, AUSTRALIA)

CONSUMERS - "Generation Of Now" CD

So here's the apparent scoop on these guys. They were an Arizona band back in '77 and moved to Cali more specifically Hollywood and this is their "lost" LP. The story is new to me but this one ass kicking punk record. Falling somewhere in between THE GEARS, early DESCENDENTS, and The STOOGES, we have eleven punk classics here! (RL)

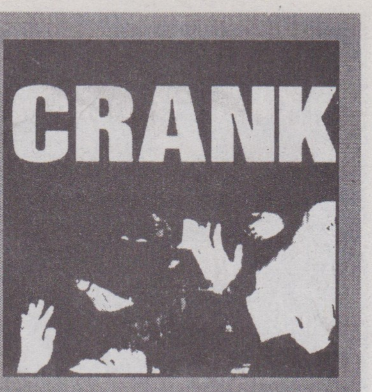
(In The Red, 118 W. Magnolia Blvd., PO Box 208, Burbank, CA 91506, www.intheredrecords.com)

THE CRAMPS - “Hot Club Philadelphia Nov. ‘77” - LP

Well, it’s got a lot of the hits, and the sound, though terrible, isn’t unthinkably terrible. But you know, it’s not like there’s a shortage of memorable CRAMPS performances to bootleg from. Where will it end? (AC)
(no address)

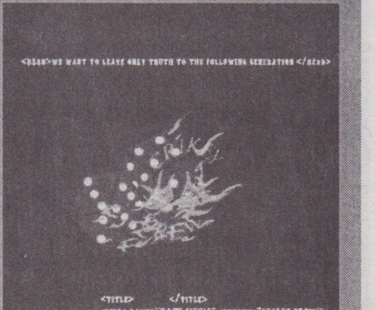
CRANK - “Vibrate Your Souls” CD

These are hard charging tunes that are a mix of East Coast hardcore, mid-tempo metal and a couple brief moments of speedmetal. The vocals are really crusty and gruff, which really adds the music. CRANK is from Japan, but if you can track down this CD you should check it out. (RC)
(Hard Core Kitchen, Karum Bldg #304 2-6-2 Kitanagasam Chuo-Ku, Kobe 650-0012, JAPAN, hxcxk@pf.highway.ne.jp)



CRIKEY CREW - “My Sons” CD

I’ve heard the name, but never the music and I was a little disappointed. This isn’t bad, metallic guitars in the NYHC vein but at an oi speed (*ie* kinda plodding). The dudes in the band aren’t skins and definitely look more “hardcore” but the songs like “Warrior” and “Fight Back” are definitely knucklehead material (even though there’s no lyric sheet). The problem is that its just too damn slow and the songs are too damn long (some clock in at 6 minutes!!). (TB)
(Sniffer, 722-111, Shimonakano, Okoyama City, JAPAN)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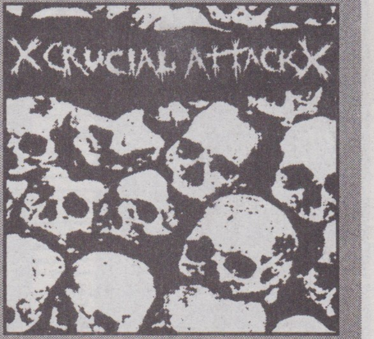
CRUCIAL ATTACK - “Take it Back” EP

Straightforward, politically charged thrash/hardcore with good hooks and good songwriting. Interesting to see quite a few anarcho-straightedge bands around these days, reaffirming what straightedge is and should be. I think CRUCIAL ATTACK says it best when they write that “being straightedge has never been about conformity, tough guy attitudes or Adidas break-away pants. It’s about rebellion, individualism, and root beer. If you’re straightedge and not punk, you might as well be Christian jock.” Yet, despite this clever display of wit, I was a bit disappointed by the lyrics, which are a bit too run-of-the-mill for my taste. A decent record none the less. (SP)
(625, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413, www.625thrash.com)



CYNICS - “Turn Me Loose/You’ve Never Had It Better”

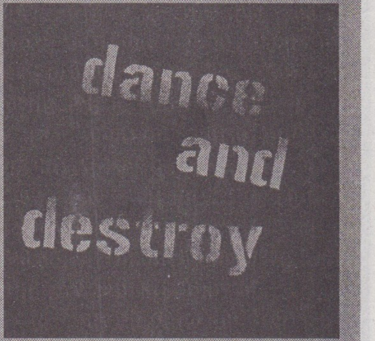
Yep. This band will outlive us all. They’ll be cranking out 45’s when we’re all long gone, I’m about sure of it. Much like their UK counterparts (perhaps in spirit only) the HEADCOATS, there’s about four thousand CYNICS records out there, and if you like one, you’ll probably be safe to pick any of them up. This is consistent with what I know of their previous output-it’s got hooks, it’s got harmonicas (?!), it’s definitely got verve. Only time I ever saw them, they were great. Not to mention that FUGAZI got to open for them. Seems sorta surreal nowadays! (TM)
(Get Hip, P.O. Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317)

CYNICS - “Doin’ Me In/Last Day”

The venerable Pittsburgh garage band unleashes yet another double-sided slab that’s sure to please fans but isn’t on par with their toughest stuff. I wouldn’t be surprised if this isn’t a reissue of an early single, because it has that vintage ‘80s garage sound... y’know, cleanly-produced mid-tempo 60s jangle, from back when bands used to record in studios. Unfortunately, I don’t have my research materials in front of me, so I can’t say for sure. And why isn’t there a picture sleeve? File behind their Rock ‘n’ Roll album and Get My Way single. (JG)
(Get Hip, P.O. Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317)

D.I.E./OKADA - split EP

Harsh Japanese noise meets harsh Japanese distortion. You figure out which one is which! Ha Ha. You could call OKADA “uncompromising” if you wanted-because they (he?) haven’t compromised to all those conventional musical concepts—like songs, structure, lyrics, etc. Simply put, noise. Interesting, but nothing I’d ever pull out after a long day at the office. There’s too many other people doing the same, but better. D.I.E. blast through six songs in about as long as it will take you to read this. Gruff vocals, frenzied pace, and also ‘uncompromising’. Definitely the preferred of these two! (TM)
(Harshit, 837-6 Horinishi Hadano, Kanagawa 259-1331, JAPAN)



DANCE & DESTROY - “Mission Control! Mission Control!” EP

There’s a definite contrast between the sheer stupid chaos this band generates in their more cacophonous moments, and the more grandiose, keyboard and melody-driven parts, where they actually sound like they take themselves seriously. The listener (me) is going “is this a joke? is this a noise project?”... “No, this is politically conscious screamo”... “No wait, it’s a noise project again.” Maybe it’s the keyboards that are the source of the confusion-sometimes they just sound silly. There’s no other word for it. Despite that though, I actually heartily enjoyed this record. One to watch, pop kids. (AM)
(Harmless, 1437 W. Hood, Chicago, IL 60660)

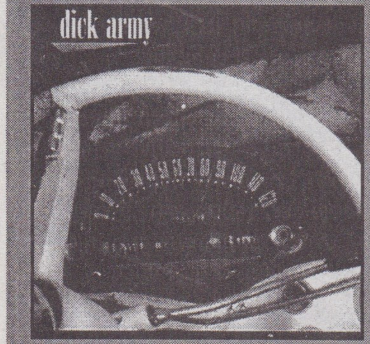
GLENN DANZIG - “The Glorious Past of...” EP

First off,I almost got my ass kicked last night in Los Gatos for saying “fuck the MISFITS.” To all the Los Gatos punk rock twelve year olds; I stand by my words, “Fuck the MISFITS.” What we got here is a live track by SAMHAIN, another live track by DANZIG and an out-take of “Nike-A-Go-Go” limited to 320 copies. MISFITS morons will gobble this shit up (and if you are dumb

The glorious past of
Glenn Danzig
DANZIG
MISFITS
HAIN
Including very rare tracks

DEAD INSIDE

LES DIPSOMANES



enough to actually send away for this then you truly are a fucking moron). Sound quality isn't that bad but the performances give me a diarrhea. This sounds like ass. I don't give a shit, Glen sounds like Jim Morrison after he gargled with bourbon and glass. I never liked anything DANZIG did after the MISFITS (I never really liked the MISFITS either) so this annoys me even more than the average reviewer. (BM)
(No Labels, Backstreet 696, Dungeon Ev-9696, IL)

DARLINGTON - "Louder than Morrissey" CD
These Dallas delinquents sport more tattoos than Axl Rose, but let's thank Izzy that they don't sound like it. Instead, they've got the speedy pop-punk thing down, even approaching the brilliance of Sweet Baby on a couple tunes, like "Chrysanthemum." But a bunch of the songs are merely lowest common denominator Queers-worship, like "Boobs, Boobs, Boobs." "Joe Queer Suxx" is pretty funny, tho'. (JG)
(Stardumb, PO Box 21145, 3001 AC Rotterdam, NETHERLANDS, stardumbrecords.com)

DAYGLO ABORTIONS - "Feed US.A. Fetus" LP
If you don't have this classic, get off yer duff and pick it up. Thanks to Beer City and God records you have a chance to pick up this gem with a couple bonus tracks: "Ronald McRay Gun" and "East Indian!" Totally obnoxious metal hardcore brilliance! (HM)
(Beer City, PO Box 26035, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0035, www.beercity.com)

DEAD INSIDE - "No.4" CD
Hardcore in a SWIZ sort of way but I'm afraid to say it because they really aren't as good. Deep throaty yelling, catchy but heavy guitar playing and pretty strait forward up-tempo drumming. At times the music has a poppy feel which makes it sound much less like SWIZ but then again you shouldn't take my comparisons seriously. (PA)
(Firefly, P.O. Box 30179, London, E17 5FE, England, UK, www.fireflyrecordings.com)

LES DIPSOMANES - "Vie Torture" CD
I always grade French punk and rocker records on a curve, I admit it. The excellent stuff, and the French have been on a seven-year run that shows no immediate signs of letting up, doesn't need boosterism. Then there's bands like LES DIPSOMANES who are a really solid punk-rocker band who just don't have that killer track to put 'em into the upper rung of French bands. However, if I'm stuck in Marseilles some day and I see these guys are playing I'm gonna go. It's either them or psuedo-Algerian techno disco, so it's no contest. These guys are a band to watch. (RW)
(Zerocontrol, 22 Rue De Bourrassol, 31300 Toulouse, FRANCE, www.zerocontrol@club-internet.fr)

DICK ARMY - "Unsafe at Any Volume" CD
I've been meaning to check these guys out for ages so I was glad when their latest full length turned up in my bin. I figured this was going to be sloppy punk with toilet humor but I was way off mark. This LP is just straight ahead Punk Rock, reminding me of the PINK LINCOLNS or a less garagey ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN. I could do with a few more hooks to really keep my attention but I really enjoyed this. (TB)
(Vital Music, PO Box 210, New York, NY, 10276-0210)

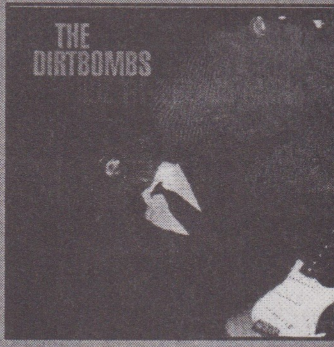
DIRTBOMBS - "Ode To A Black Man" EP
Well, If anyone is deserving of an "Ode To A Black Man" it's Mick Collins. In the song he says things like "If you see Robert Johnson, Stevie Wonder, Jimmy Hendrix tell him I'm here..." I say fair enough, the man is a bad ass, give him his recognition. From the GORIES to the DIRTBOMBS, every soul inspired rock 'n' roll bluesy number the guy has done for the last ten years has been great. You can't go wrong with the DIRTBOMBS. Oh by the way, this song appeared on the *Ultraglide In Black* LP that came out earlier this year. (AS)
(Sweet Nothing/Cargo Records, info@cargouk.co.uk)

DISAFFECT - "Discography" CD
Crucial political crust from the UK. DISAFFECT split up nearly 10 years ago, but as I listen to these songs, they still go right for the throat. Heavy on the DISCHARGE (but faster), along with the classic female/male vocals, metal intros and blatant political lyrics that one would expect from a British crust band. This disc contains two EPs, two splits, and their brilliant *Chained to Morality* LP. Sure, the production is a bit thin at times (although the LP tracks sound like thunder...fuck, what a great record), but so fucking what? An awesome band that stands well against the test of time. If you aren't familiar with DISAFFECT, then here's the whole band on one disc. (WN)
(Panoptic Vision, PO Box 3590, Uddington, G71 6YG SCOTLAND)

DISCIPLINE - "Love Thy Neighbor" LP
Thirteen songs that sound like the 4 SKINS at times and DROPKICK MURPHYS at other times. They do it far better than most of the jokers trying to pull this stuff off. (NF)
(Knockout, Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken GERMANY)

THE DISHES - "1-2" CD
I didn't understand what these girls were trying to do until I saw that they did a cover of "Feel It" by MOTORCYCLE BOY and then I realized that it's just rock n' roll. The problem is that this CD is totally overproduced. It just sounds way too clean for the sort of funky, sexy tunes that they do. This is just my opinion but I seriously think a layer of fuzz and some vox effects would make this

so much better and trashier!!. Of course it's a matter of taste but this sounds too much like something on MTV. (JT)
(No. 89, PO Box 220472. Chicago, IL 60622)



THE DISHES - "Girls Can't Play/Crying Shame" EP

"Girls Can't Play" has a WIRE feel with saucy female vocals. The flip is a bouncy, upbeat STOOGES-esque ditty complete with tambourine, hand claps and soulful vocals. These girls play pretty good. (HM)
(Glaze, PO Box 82006, Columbus, OH 43202, www.glazed.com)

DIXIE BUZZARDS- "The Beat" EP

Jesus, the Swedes never fail to amaze me. They've got their ears close to the ground picking up every pulse of punk culture around the globe. You name the type of punk music, and there's a Swedish band out there that does it better than anyone. This rules. Lo-fi, fuzzy, rock 'n' roll blues hell. You'd think this was easily from Detroit or Memphis, but Stockholm? Wow, big thumbs up, here's what they sound like: CRAMPS, GORIES, KING LOUIE. (AS)
(Yakisana, 51, Rue Pierre Renaudel - 76 100 Rouen, FRANCE, yakisanarecords.fr.st)

DIXIE BUZZARDS - "Save It For Me" EP

Low-rent Swedes spit out three OBLIVIANS/GORIES-inspired numbers on this no-budget record. Photocopied sleeve, sub-basement recording, three-chord rock 'n' roll tunes—it's like the early '90s all over again! Sounds pretty fine to these ears, but I bet they're even better live. (JG)
(Therapeutic, U.N.O. Box 534, New Orleans, LA 70148-9998)

Save It
for Me EP
DIXIE
BUZZARDS

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT/SPLITFIELD - split LP

I am many things, one thing I am not is a fucking code breaker. If you are going to release a split LP please list the band on their respective side. I like to use my detective skills in finding new places to eat burritos or Indian food, not on which band has sucks more (SPLITFIELD). Now that I have broken the code, I want everyone to know that this record sucks. SPLITFIELD play whiny emoesque pop punk similar to ALKALINE TRIO and LAWRENCE ARMS, that is actually even less offensive. DWAI kick things off with the longest chorus of whoa's that I have ever heard. I swear the thing goes on for like three minutes straight. Otherwise it is straight ahead pop flavored punk, that is neither good or really bad. (JF)
(Walk In Cold, 8408 Lakeside Drive, Downers Grove, IL 60516)

DOROCHYS - "T.O.D." CD

This is pretty crazy. It starts out with a lot of soloing, real rock and roll. It made me think of JIMI HENDRIX or the LAB RATS. But it turns out these guys play some pretty cool punk rock with MISFITS style vocals, and plenty of things to shout out at shows. The production is really dirty, but it works for this. The lyrics are all in Japanese, so I got nothing to say about them. Overall, this is pretty good. (WR)
(Dorochys, 1-11-18 Bisyoen Abenoku, Osaka, 545-0003, JAPAN)

DOWN & AWAY - "Rising Up" EP

Good ole fist pumping, anthemic French street punk. The songs are well-written, catchy in that riot inciting way, and the lyrics are in English so you know what you're rioting about. This is a good record. (DP)
(Dirty Punk, BP 302, 59666 Villeneuve d'Ascq cedex, FRANCE, dirtypunk @wanadoo.fr)

DOWN IN FLAMES - "Best Friend" EP

I really fucking love DOWN IN FLAMES. Their last few EPs are some of my favorite hardcore records from the past year. This record, though, is not so hot. At this point, they were playing melodic youth-crew hardcore, and they did that pretty well. The music is GORILLA BISCUITS - style hardcore. You know what it sounds like. The lyrics are pretty typical youth crew stuff about friends. It is all sincere and well intentioned. The difference, now is that DOWN IN FLAMES has gotten a lot faster and less melodic and really fucking good at writing songs. I would recommend any other DOWN IN FLAMES release over this one. (WR)
(Platinum, PO Box 1812, 74308 Bietigheim, GERMANY)

DOWN IN FLAMES - "Three Seven Inches..." CD

Indeed, this is simply the three EPs (split with GATE CRASHERS, split with TEAR IT UP, and the Start the *Fucking Fire* EP), which all likely received excellent reviews from everyone here at *MRR*, combined on one CD. Flex Your Head-era revival hardcore at its best, played by kids who may not have even been born yet when that record came out. Now if that isn't a slap in the face to the "Hardcore Establishment", I don't know what is. The songs on these EPs are really consistent, which makes for a good listen. So, if you missed the EPs on vinyl form, pick this up. (SP)
(Gloom, PO Box 14253, Albany, NY 12212, www.gloomrecords.com)

DRATS - "Ohio" EP

Wow. This record is not at all what I expected. DRATS play straightforward, mid-tempo punk rock with lots of spirit. It is catchy, but the vocals scream over it. It actually reminds me a little of BORN AGAINST at times. The music is fucking rad, but the lyrics put this record over the top for me. They're not amazing, but really simple lyrics that do a good job of getting the point across. They flow really well. I'm pretty sure they got dual vocals, too. To top it off, it seems like they care

DOWN IN FLAMES
THREE SEVENINCHES ON ONE CD

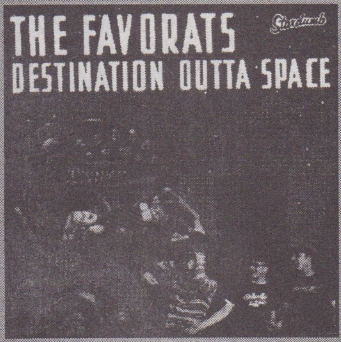
about what they're singing about, but they don't take themselves too seriously so it is still fun. Fucking rad. (WR)
(Slaves to Darkness, PO Box 34695, San Diego, CA 92163)

THE DROPSKOTS - "Someday Maybe" CD
With the terrible art and SCREECHING WEASEL shirt, I thought these guys were gonna sound a lot cleaner, but the heavily distorted guitar, coarse vocals and frantic drums give them more of an edge initially. By the third song the lovesick vocals have started singing and the guitar starts toning down. By the fourth song, the DROPSKOTS start to sound like the average pop punk band. I'm usually not inclined to read pop punk lyrics to songs like: "Favorite Band," "Awesome," "Lame," "Bummer," "Soulmate" and "Annoying People," but it sucks trying to read lyrics to songs like that in small pixilated computer fonts. This punk's feeling too jaded for this run-of-the-mill kiddie pop punk. (HM)
(King Bee, PO Box 1164, Denver, CO 80202, www.geocities.com/dropskots)

DUANE PETERS & THE HUNNS - "Wayward Bantams" LP
Upbeat and energetic punk rock in the way of the commonly accepted "UK" style. I interpret that to mean that it's simple, catchy and has choruses I can pick up on and sing the first listen. Nothing wrong with that - there's always been a reason for that style to be so popular! Lyrics cover a broad range of topics, including some 9/11/01 commentary. Duane Peters being no slouch on the catchy punk tip—you know what to expect with his involvement. Vinyl includes a Joe Strummer cover as a bonus track. (TM)
(Disaster, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)

EL MARIACHI - "Das Ding: Leben" LP
Extremely catchy punk rock on beautiful clear vinyl! Mid-tempo and a bit melodic, great guitar, and expressive male vocals. It's all in German, but it comes with translations. Excellent! (SR)
(Falling Down c/o Infoladen Bankrott, Dahlweg 64, 48153 Muenster, GERMANY, el_mariachi666@hotmail.com)

ESTEE LOUDER - "Screaming Voodoo" EP
Heavy rock. Not fast, not good. I must have made Tom angry. (JF)
(Burnt Head, no address)



FACTION - "Collection 1982-1985" CD
I'm pretty sure this is an exact reissue of the collection on Cargo five or seven years ago. I never did get that or find it in the meantime so this is a welcome sight. The FACTION were one of those great NoCal second tier bands. Second tier in popularity, not so much in quality. Damn, I was in one of those bands along with the FACTION and we had a great time opening for the biggies like CIRCLE JERKS, TSOL, and DOA to name drop a few. Headlining an occasional smaller show to boot. I must say this disc sounds pretty great 15 years down the road. Great tuneful punk that has stood the test of punk time. Always labeled a skate band because of the STEVE CABALLERO thing, this is still just good punk to my ears. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm gonna go put on my leather jacket that doesn't fit me anymore and blast *Not So Quiet On The Western Front.* (RL)
(Beer City, PO Box 26035, Milwaukee, WI 53226, the_faction@mac.com)

FAVORATS - "Destination Outta Space" EP
Whoa. This is some bubblegum shit here. Anytime a "punk' band describes their music as "beautiful tunes", I get a bit concerned. Guess it's been done before, and done well even-the JAM or BUZZCOCKS could probably be called that. Although I wouldn't. Cause that would seem like some kind of insult. Maybe I'm just old and grumpy. Yeah, that's probably the case. This is "beautiful" punk songs, with appropriate amounts of melody, happiness and sunshine. Ugh. (TM)
(Stardumb, PO Box 21145, 3001 AC Rotterdam, NETHERLANDS)

F-MINUS/CRACK ROCK STEADY SEVEN - split CD
A mixed bag here. F-MINUS deliver with their usual "punk as fuck" style. Though think early '80s English punk as that style. Good stuff. CRACK ROCK STEADY SEVEN is the project that existed right after CHOKING VICTIM and before LEFTOVER CRACK. CRSS isn't as bad as LEFTOVER CRACK; of course, not many bands are. Nor are they as good as CHOKING VICTIM, and this is coming from the guy who ranks CHOKING VICTIM as #3490 on the punk all time list too. If you see it in the dollar bin this may be worth picking up. (JF)
(Hellbent, PO box 1529, Pt. Pleasant Beach, NJ 08742)

FOKKEWOLF - "Porno Rocker/Reminiscing"
From Incognito, here's some positively fast, hard, short, and raunchy punk 'n' roll. It's pretty simple: if you like to get loud and loaded, this is the shit for you. (DL)
(Incognito,Senefelderstr, 37A 70176 Stuttgart, GERMANY)

FOR INSTANCE - "FSK" CD
Straight outta the MINOR THREAT school of crunchy guitars, Ian-style vocals and tireless hardcore beats. I can't read the tiny lyrics, but I gotta go with their "most important" message: "alcohol, sex & drugs (in which ever order they arrive)". These hardcores certainly aren't straight edge. (HM)
($7 ppd: Damien Robertson c/o Bitch Slap, PO Box 952, Grover Beach, CA 93483, www.bitchslaprecords.com)

FORTY NINES - "To the Lonely Hearts" CD

Punks don't do love songs! We're angry, not whiny. We have record collections instead of significant others. Get with the program, people. The FORTY NINES play lost love songs. They whine, cry, and act very sensitive. They sound like they could be on Vagrant. The bands on Vagrant suck. So does this CD. (JF)

(End, PO Box 101013, Ft. Worth, TX 76185)

FRICTION - "Crazy Dream" EP

FRICTION were one of the first "punk" bands to actually get any vinyl out of the late-reacting '70s Japanese scene. They were always a little artier in a proto-No Wave style then the other early competition ala STAR CLUB and MIRRORS etc. When I first saw this exact 8"-sized thick paper envelope reissue of their first EP, I thought, "Wow, this bootlegger is really conscientious." Turns out it's a legit reissue by a company that plans to do a bunch of late '70s/early '80s Japanese arty 'punk'. Funny thing is, FRICTION's best stuff is their super-rare live distorto 10" and the killer guitar-monster P*istol* 7", neither of which is on their reissue schedule. This first EP is a minor pleasure, and I hope they get around to the right FRICTION records down the road. (RW)

(Pass/Sky Station, www.ymns.com/skystationpass)

FUNERAL - "Cry of State Desperation" EP

Andy Darling gave these earnest gentlemen's LP a review that has to be one of the top ten most well written reviews in M*RR* history. In passing he suggested that this band owed much of their sound to DISCHARGE. The spartan lyrics and strict verse/chorus approach of the masters can be found on this five song EP as well. The recording has a blown amp quality which compliments the loose, sloppy (in the good way) assault. A crisp recording job would have had them sounding as if the were struggling at managing this genre and would have been sloppy (in the bad way). (TH)

(PO Box 40113, Portland City, OR 97240-0113)

GASOLHEADS - "Red Wine & White Russians" 10"

I think it would be cool if this band released nothing but ten inches from now on. No reason, I'm just sayin'. So far the two they've made were a very good idea. This band just rocks in a way that I can wholeheartedly wrap my ears around. Catchy, not fancy, and none of the usual posturing and/or hot-rod type artwork that could go along with their he-manly rock and roll sound. Europeans don't normally go out like that anyway, and I love 'em for it. (RY)

(Dead Beat, PO Box 283 Los Angeles, CA 90078)

GASOLINE - "Take It to the People" 10"

......it's been a long-ass time sence I got to review something on Estrus....nothing at all has changed.....brand-spanking-new 2002 record that looks like any other Estrus record.....boring....yet more of that endless "howl"....that loud, distorted swamp-rock with lots of screams and yells over it.....you all know, like In The Red.......but this puppy is one of those Estrus ten inch jobs.....green vinyl.....dullsville baby.....I listened to both sides of this and I STILL don't feel like a new man.....is this label going to fold any time soon?????....or is it just me???...is my hate just too strong for these sonsuvbitches....maybe I'm just turning queer..... (SW)

(Estrus, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227, www.estrus.com)

GENERATORS - "State of the Nation" 10"

The GENERATORS are street punk cut from the same cloth as the US BOMBS. This is an eight song 10" with two live tracks, one of which is a cover of COCKSPARRER's "Running Riot." One of the best songs, "The Voices in his Head," which is about presidential assassination, will probably earn the GENERATORS their own FBI file complete with wiretapping and video surveillance. (DP)

(Deadbeat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078)

THE GONADS - "Schiz-Oi!-Phrenia" LP

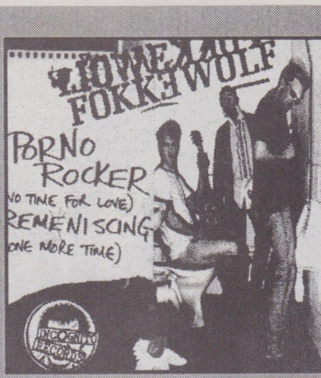
I'm sure that many skinheads and oi fans will lap the GONADS up. I can't in good conscience condone this record. They'll have you believe they're just a bunch of jack-the-lads,into red meat and beer and Eastenders and Page 3 stunnas, just like every 'real' Englishman, right? There's even a song about how Hitler was a homo-a cheap shot designed to disguise the fact that singer Gal Gonad's politics aren't actually that far from the late Nazi leader's. It's not hidden too well though-on songs like "British Steel" ("These are your colours and your colours never run") and "Bulldog Rebel Psycho Punks" ("You'll find some frog with his head down a bog saying 'Oui Oui Oui'") Gal's real motives start to come through-England for the English. Y'see, our Gal is actually Garry Bushell, a longtime journalistic bottom-dweller well known for shrouding his right-wing, sexist, homophobic, racist views in "it's just common sense" man-of-the-people "working class" rants in the UK's top tabloid newspaper. His is the worst kind of insidious fascism, couched in patriotism and misguided nationalism. The music on this record is catchy, but not enough for me to endorse anything with this cunt's mark on it. Garry Bushell, you are a fucking wanker. Fuck You. (AM)

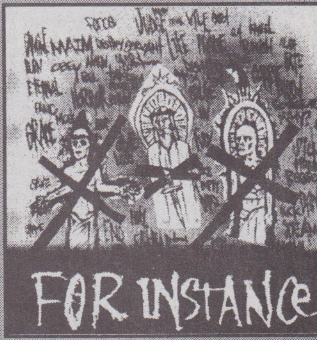
(Knock Out, Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY)

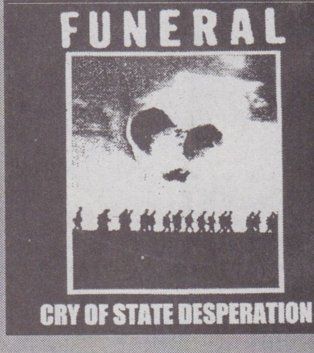
GRIFFIN - "Singles Collection...2" CD

I don't understand this, but don't really care to. They are a very Goth-looking Japanese band. Booklet is hard to read too...what the hell is this? O.K., I'm getting a total MISFITS thing now, it's all starting to make sense. It's the Japanese MISFITS. Whew, I can go home now! (RY)

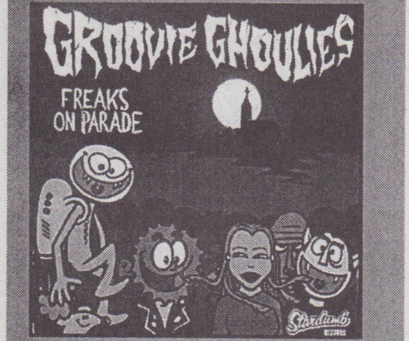
(Money Talks)



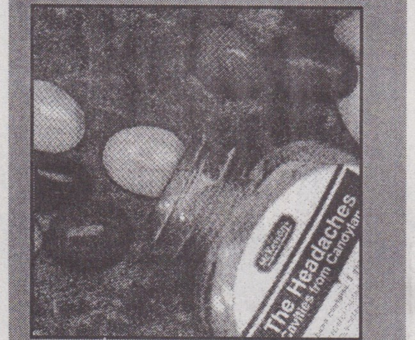




GRIFFIN
singles
collection 2



HATE MAIL KILLERZ
BLEEDING/ JUMPING - EP



GRIFFIN - "Singles Collection...2" CD

This CD compiles this formidable Japanese band's later singles. Yes they are sort of a Japanese MISFITS style band but not to the same extent as the mighty BALZAC. Good stuff for you fiends out there, but personally I'd try to hunt down the first singles collection over this one or even better, BALZAC records. (MT)
(Money Talks)

GROOVIE GHOULIES - "Freaks on Parade" CDEP

Kepi and Roach are back with B-Face in tow (Queers and Mopes) and yet another new drummer (who as of a few months ago has become "yet another ex-drummer") Matt K (SHRUGGS). Six songs, all of them winners. You get all of your basic GHOULIES food groups here; monsters, sci-fi love and only four chords. Mix the RAMONES, CRAMPS and BANANA SPLITS and you have the GROOVIE GHOULIES. (BM)
(Stardumb, PO BOX 21145, 3001 AC Rotterdam, NETHERLANDS, stardumbsrecords.com, stefan@stardumbrecords.com)

GROUPUSKULL - "Tise Party" EP

This new item on Cranes Blases is French Oi! of the highest caliber. GROUPUSKULL begin with "L'apero" which has chugging guitar rhythms propelling good gruff lead vocals and full throated choruses from all the skinheads. The song builds a wicked momentum to finish off with a bang! "Choisir sa Mort" is the second song on this EP and the number slows things down a bit and lets the guitar player get in some heavy licks. The drummer is mixed up front and supplies a superior beat to keep the whole EP pinned down. GROUPUSKULL sings in French and the lyrics inside are in the French language. The feeling-the passion of the music comes through as a universal message. Side two commences with "Maitrise ta Biere" and the vocals on this are killer! Song four wraps up this French skinhead adventure. "Triste Realite" is alternately slow and then fast with a lot of sheer power lurking down in those black grooves! This is a fine release from Cranes Blases Records. We will be awaiting more material from GROUPUSKULL! (BR)
(Cranes Blases, BP 85, 75561 Paris CX12, FRANCE)

HATE MAIL KILLERZ - "Bleeding/Jumping" EP

This EP plays at 33 but sounds like its at 45, 19 songs, fast as fuck and punk with a capital P. Really raw recording, frantic high pitched vocals that sound almost like a rougher early DRI with elements of DIY punk like FYP (on speed). As they say on the cover "DIY you fuck"! (TB)
(Skeletor, 11161 S.Trumbull, Chicago, IL 60655)

HEADACHES - "Cavities from Candyland" CD

Apparently this band put out a single back in '81 and then broke up only to reform in '99 with three of the four original members... then became obsessed with their only claim to fame; going top ten on Mp3's pop punk charts (what the fuck??). Whatever. Despite the nerdy press pack that came long with this, this CD is amazing. Sounding just like they did in '81 they fuse elements of the BUZZCOCKS, BOYS and GENERATION X. With a song like "Let's Bash The Clash" this is not going to leave my CD player for quite a while (I hate the CLASH more than I hate the MISFITS). This is simply perfect new wave-y power pop punk. Flawless. (BM)
($10 ppd: 5601 N. Sheridan Rd, Unit 11-C, Chicago, IL 60660, theheadaches.com, the_headaches@hotmail.com)

HEAVEN SHALL BURN - "Whatever It May Take" CD

Germany's HEAVEN SHALL BURN blast through 13 songs of head-thumping metalcore. Huge chopping riffs that mix in black and death metal influences demand your attention. The songs are complex and well produced and what the music lacks in speed in makes up with sheer power. This is totally pulverizing! I read somewhere that they just did a tour of Brazil and things went very well. I can only hope that they will make it over to the USA. But I doubt it, because these types of bands never make it to our shores. (RC)
(Lifeforce, PO Box 938, 09009 Chemnitz, GERMANY, www.lifeforcerecords.com)

HIBERNATION - "Loneliness" EP

Creepy-eepy hardcore ala early NEUROSIS, COUNTERBLAST, or for you old timers, AXEGRINDER. One of the better things I've ever heard come out of Greece to tell you the truth. Good for instilling your dreams with nightmares or as background noise to telling spooky stories. For those of you keeping score, the Greek version of this über eerie band's name is XEIMEPIA NAPKH, but I'm listing it under the English translation because I'm guessing that is what it will be listed as in most distros. (MT)
(Power It Up, Postfach 1114, 38156 Vechelde GERMANY)

HILLSTREET STRANGLERS - CD

I like the HILLSTREET STRANGLERS. The vocals are quite frantic, there is a wall of sound guitar thing going on, and the drumming is all over the place and very cymbally. With 14 songs, some really good, some just OK. The style is melodic and would be called generic but for the above qualities. It's all in the details, I tell ya. (DP)
(E Is for Evil, www.eisforevil.org)

HOTWIRES - "The Red Glare of Rockets" 10"

Ex-ACTION TIME folks from the UK doing stuff that's outta the sludge-garage-STOOGES school

of rock muzak. More garbled vocals here than the a SUICIDE record under water. The spirit of Iggy and co. abounds here along with an appreciation for snotty sixties punk and old school punk rawk. Cool shit with an ear for good old-school guitar power chord sludge tones, distorted and garbled vocals with attitude, simple effective/catchy tunes. Does the job quite nicely and mostly devoid of any posturing or stylistic bandwagon-ing. Very cool. (JY)
(Concrete Life, 66B Grove Park Rd. Tottenham, London NIS 4SN, UK, www.thehotwires.com)

the
Hillstreet Stranglers

HUMAN WASTE - "Lagar Ar Till For Att Brytas" EP

It appears that the plague of thrashy hardcore bands from Sweden is getting worse. HUMAN WASTE brings to mind bands like SKITSYSTEM and ACURSED, but with an urgency found in E.T.A., OUTLAST, and other "younger" bands from Sweden. Translation: really fucking fast, totally brutal, heavier than a bag of hammers, and extremely fuckin pissed. Lyrics about cops (of course), the police state, capital punishment, and back stabbers. An awesome record...now good luck finding it (hint: the address below is the band's, contact the label via email if you so desire). (WN)
(New Noise, Box 5, 832 21 Froson, SWEDEN, newnoiserecords@hotmail.com)

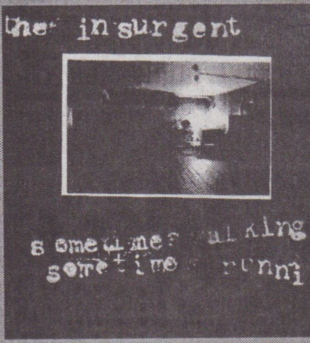
UMAN WASTE – LAGAR AR TILL FOR ATT BRYTA

IMMORTALITY - "I Think Therefore I Am" CD

How this is punk is beyond me, but here it is on these pages. Japanese metal. It might pass for death metal, but it's not really fast enough. Low gutteral vocals, a lot of open E riffing, and four minute long songs. Like if ASSUCK only played mid tempo and slow songs...with guitar solos. Or maybe is HELLCHILD were more...um, more METAL. The more I listen to this, the more it reminds me of AGONY COLUMN, the good stuff though, "Brave Words and Bloody Knuckles" is a horrible record, while "God, Guns and Guts" is a masterpiece. But as for IMMORTALITY, I figure you probably get the idea by now...right? (WN)
(Hardcore Kitchen, Karum Bldg #304, 2-6-2 Kitanagasa, Chou-Ku, Kobe 650-0012, JAPAN)

THE INSURGENT - "Sometimes Walking, Sometimes Running" EP

For once, reviewing a record doesn't feel like it has to be entirely different experience than reviewing a zine. And it really shouldn't, but we all know the dichotomy exists: esthetically, culturally. In the included zine (OK, liner notes, but more packed with ideas than some zines I've seen) THE INSURGENT calls this EP "a product of being in love with these people, ideas and music," and before you can get to the accusation, claims not to be naive. I admire this—they did a really good job of convincing me, for today, that DIY can help you stay human, *and* fight the signs of aging! They are from Long Island, and their sound is poppy-screamy, virtually bursting with idealism, and could slide in on a bill with, say, AMBITION MISSION or TREPAN NATION. (AC)
(Traffic Violation, PO Box 772, East Satauket, NY 11733, wells@trafficviolation.com)

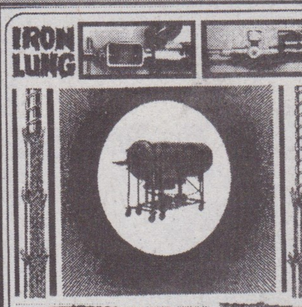


IRANACH/STRUCTURE OF LIES - split CD

STRUCTURE OF LIES starts off this disc with three songs of unrelenting death. Death metal played by punks is subtly different than the same style played by hessians, and that difference comes out a bit...think SUICIDE NATION instead of EXHUMED. Bonus points for the DEVIATED INSTINCT cover, which sounds better than the damned original. IRANACH, offer up three songs of their own. Cartoon grind here...I cannot stop laughing at the fucking frog they brought into the studio to "sing." No shit, the dude has effects on his voice that make him ribbit instead of growl...I can't imagine that they meant it to be this funny, but the shit is ridiculous. At any rate, the music is pretty good fast/mosh grindcore, from what I can hear under the amphibian on the mic. (WN)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91519)

IRON LUNG - "Demonstrations In Pressure and Volume" EP

Fuck yeah! In my last column I mentioned how much I liked IRON LUNG and by the luck of the draw I get to review their EP this month. In case you didn't see my column IRON LUNG is a two-piece from Reno, Nevada. Don't let that two-piece thing fool you, because these guys destroy live and on vinyl. They crank out song after song of densely produced punishing grind. Fierce vocals spit out twisted lyrics mostly centering around medical instruments. In fact they sold some of these records at their Gilman show with a sealed hypodermic needle. Hell, maybe one of them is a medical student. And by the way the drummer Jensen is in so many bands right now that people are starting to refer to him as the Max Ward of Reno. So it is only appropriate that this release is out on.... (RC)
(625 Thrashcore, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413)

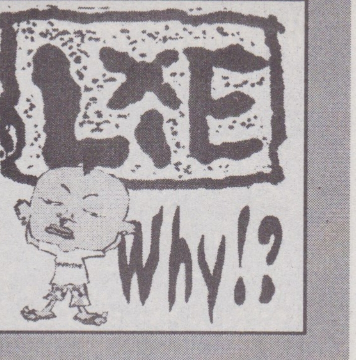


JOHN STAMOS PROJECT - "Take Your Best Shot" CD

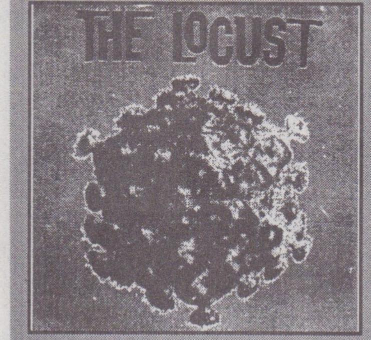
Once you get past the stupid band name, bad cover art, and bad back cover band photo, you got one rocking pop punk disc here. In the vein of the QUEERS and WEASEL, this is fueled by raw production and a goofy attitude on destined to be classics like "My Mom Still Thinks I'm Straight Edge". A fun raw romp circa l991. (RL)
($7 ppd., Reinforcement, www.reinforcementrecords.com)

THE LEROY FIX - "Stoned American!" CD

Dude, these longhairs like their pot and it comes out in so many ways, like, say wah-wah pedals, acoustic guitar, and other space-like rock effects, i.e. stoner rock. Excuse me while I barf... (DL)
(Hatekord, no address)



LOCKJAW
JOURNALIST JIVE!
I'M A VIRGIN
ADOONGA DOONGA



LIBERTINAGEM - "The Manifesto" CD

Wow—this is crazy. Equal parts influenced by the likes of CRASS, CATHARSIS, FUGAZI, and THE EX; LIBERTINAGEM paint an eclectic web of Brasilian punk which deals with personal liberation and revolution. Sure many folx do do this in a very generic sort of way, but they manage to keep it fresh—especially in dealing with sexuality. Not punk in a studs'n spikes sort of way but good stuff none the less. (MT)

(Colectivo Cisma, Rua Sto. Antônio do Monte 376, Belo Horizonte/MG 30330-220, BRASIL, coletivocisma@hotmail.com)

LIE - "Why?" EP

Super fast thrashy Japanese hardcore on 625. Four tracks of unbridled mayhem. It rips, it shreds, it's hurting my head. (AD)

(625 Thrashcore, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413)

LIFE - "Master of Darkness" EP

Wow, this is intense. LIFE makes you feel like you're in the middle of whirling tornado, the way the double bass bangs up against your eardrums. Think of a thrashier, less polished (not in a bad way) version of RORSCHACH and you get the picture. Intricate, but rough at the same time. The vocals on this EP are just awesome. Anyone into '80s Japanese punk/metal crossover should check this out. Apparently they have an LP that was released recently as well. (SP)

(Punk Bastard, c/o Yutaka Abe, #102 2-21-30 Asagaya-Kita, Suginami, Tokyo 166-0001, JAPAN)

LIFE - "The World Lies Across Them" LP

Heavy, sweaty, raw, longhaired Japanese crust. Vocals are high, not growly. There's not much in the way of song structure here—the primary purpose is driving beats, and they got 'em. Bass noodling is actually a plus for these guys. Good stuff. (AC)

(Punk Bastard, 1-5-10 Shimuzu, Suginami, Tokyo, 167-0033, JAPAN)

LOCKJAW - "Journalist Jive!" EP

Reissue of a record that originally came out on the UK Raw label probably from 1978 or so. A band that sounds and looks like they could've been pub rockers in a previous life. Anyhoot, the lead tune "Journalist Jive" is a punky, fastish tune and my least favorite here. "Adoonga a Doonga" is a cool punk rock stomper that sounds like *Spiral Scratch* BUZZCOCKS meets the STRANGLERS, while "I'm a Virgin" has more of that old BUZZCOCKS vibe in a goofy soccer-sing-along context. Innocuous and enjoyable record here, but don't expect the parting of the red sea or anything. (JY)

(Damaged Goods, PO Box 671, London E17 9GH, UK)

LOCUST - "The Only Element That Matters..." EP

Silver sleeve with embossing, clear vinyl, one sided, the one winged LOCUST screened on the flat side of the vinyl, and six songs of high pitched immitation dog barks. It's a joke, a prank, not really a LOCUST release. I'm not sure which joke I'm supposed to be enjoying. Creating a release that appears legit because it follows the numbers isn't so clever, since it as easy to accomplish for a widely scorned band (the LOCUST) as it would for a canonized band such as LOS CRUDOS. Or am I supposed to be grinning at the small and tiny life one must have to lead to see such a project through to completion? The commentary provided by parody is necessary in any genre or subculture whether it be the ANARCHY SIX, *Killed By Death #11,* or the epic romantic novel *Shamela*. I just don't think there is a compelling critique to be found here. (TH)

(no address, idontfeelathing@yahoo.com)

LOIKAEMIE/MENACE - split EP

Hmm. Not sure what to make of this—gotta give respect to the "Good Night White Pride" emblem on the back, but didn't get bowled over by the record. Catchy, but LOIKAEMIE would have probably benefited from the guitars being more upfront, and the vocals slightly more subdued. They (the vocals) seemed to overwhelm everything else. Maybe I'm just guitar prejudiced—I like them to be the most obvious thing—first impact and that. The flip is better-more balanced production, and MENACE managed to be catchy without being overly redundant. (TM)

(Knock-Out, 46527 Dinslaken, PF 100716, GERMANY)

LYNYRD'S INNARDS - "Rise Above" LP

This is a one sided LP in which LYNYRD'S INNARDS cover eight BLACK FLAG songs. The songs are "Rise Above," "Jealous Again," "Depression," "White Minority," "Revenge," "Wasted," "Gimme Gimme Gimme" and "Six Pack". The record is pretty well explained by stating that it sounds like a pop punk band covering BLACK FLAG. The recording isn't the greatest but it suits the record well. The record is limited, my copy is terribly warped and skips in a couple places. (PA)

(Harmless, 1437 W. Hood, Chicago, IL 60660)

MACHINE GUN - "Taste for Blood" LP

Don't even read this review! They might think you like them! I know I'm going to try and forget this piece of shit record ever crossed my path. From the unbelievably ridiculously stupid cover art to lyrics like, "I'm on a first name basis with the man downstairs...he gave me my first Zippo...", to METALLICA covers, to the gratuitous metal wanking and riffing. It could drive me mad if I let it... (RY)

(I Used to Fuck People Like You In Prison, Bissenkamp 17, D-44135, Dortmund, GERMANY)

LA MERMA - "Saludo al Tirano" CD

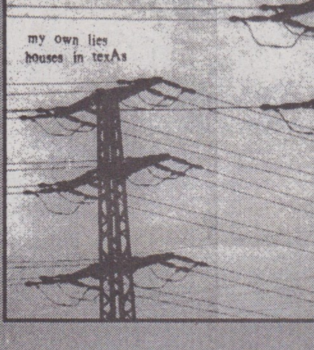
Decent pop punk sung in Spanish with a very heavy emphasis on Mexican social politics. Political music really isn't my thing at all but these boys do it well. What else can I say? Go Mexico! (BM)

(Cochebomba, PO Box 546, Randolph, MA, cochebomba@msn.com)

MIKABOMB - "The Fake Fake Sound of Mikabomb" LP

Mika #1, Mika #2, Ergi and Agi churn out of winner here, a varied but aggressive album's worth of girl-punk with enough changes of pace and irresistible hooks to arrest anyone's attention. From the rockin' and reverb-y "Super Sexy Razor Happy Girls" to the three-chord churner "Super Honda", MIKABOMB have an attitude of cheeky fun (and even outright satire) on just about every track. Strongly recommended. (SS)

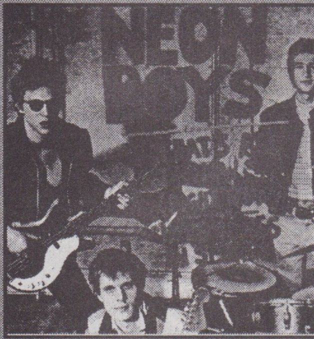
(Damaged Goods, P O Box 671, London E17 9GH UK)



MONKEYWRENCH - "...and One Really Nervous Guy" LP

A MONKEYWRENCH bootleg? In this day and age? Even now when these guys were deemed the DEAD MILKMEN of the '90s? So, yeah, we get Mr. Mark Arm, Tim Kerr, etc. here apparently recorded live in the UK opening for PEARL JAM (excitement in the room visibly goes up, right?). Just on sonic qualities, this is a very confusing record. Levels are very low, sometimes the applause in the background sounds too loud, but if you crank it up some, the recording isn't too bad. Performance wise, this is from a band which most people can say is pretty much a big "side project" for this bunch of veteran and probably now jaded luminaries. So, whadaya expect... What I will say, is the performance here sounds a lot better than my personal experience of these guys, which isn't saying a lot. Musically, they always sounded like warmed over JOHN SPENCER or almost rock stars playing the N*uggets* catalog. Anyways, you get the idea. (JY)

(no address)



MY OWN LIES/HOUSES IN TEXAS - split EP

Ok there is a grindcore band from Germany that is called HOUSES IN TEXAS. Hmm, maybe they watched a lot of the TV show Dallas when they were growing up? Hard to say. Regardless, HOUSES IN TEXAS fall in line with bands like MORSER with a full on assault of metal fueled grind with gnarly throat crushing vocals. MY OWN LIES follow a similar path with some hectic blast beat eardrum shattering grindcore. This whole record is fucking punishing! Prepare to be pummeled. (RC)

(Flowerviolence, Augartenstr. 15, 68165 Mannheim, GERMANY; www.flowerviolence.de)

NEON BOYS - "That's All I Know" EP

A RICHARD HELL/TOM VERLAINE project from 1973, this NEON BOYS bootleg has all the bluesy sound of the later-to-come HEARTBREAKERS but with that high-pitched plucky twanging TOM VERLAINE guitar. A must for those who just have to own every version in existence of "Love Comes in Spurts". (DP)

(no address)

LOLLIPOP records & MYRMECOLEO records present
NEUROTIC SWINGERS
OGMATIC SALAMANDER
FUNK-ROCK
CHAINSAW. SPLIT
状切断機的競演音盤

NEUROTIC SWINGERS/DOGMATIC SALAMANDER - "Chainsaw" split EP

Tremendous! Out of nowhere I've fallen for a band I didn't know existed. The NEUROTIC SWINGERS are some kinda sensational, could they be French? Has a STITCHES feel with more booming butt-rock guitar sound, and the ONLY ONES sensibilities with more aggression. The vocalist for DOGMATIC SALAMANDER sounds just like a Japanese Gilbert Godfried, I shit you not, and they've got a bizarro-hardcore, fast and snotty, and totally likable sound. (RY)

(Lollipop, 7 imp. Monsegur 13016 Marseille FRANCE; Myrmecoleo c/o Kenji Morita Kaguro-cho, Kyoto 603-8136 JAPAN)

NEW BOMB TURKS

NEW BOMB TURKS - "Spanish Fly By Night/Chip Away the Stone"

Ahhh...the familiar raw sounds of the NEW BOMB TURKS instantly puts me at ease. Here are two ass-kickin' short and sweet ones for you to eat up. Great big loud production. Great vinyl. (DL)

(Glazed, PO Box 82006, Columbus, OH 43201)

NONE OF YOUR FUCKING BUSINESS - "30 Seconds of None of Your Fucking Business" EP

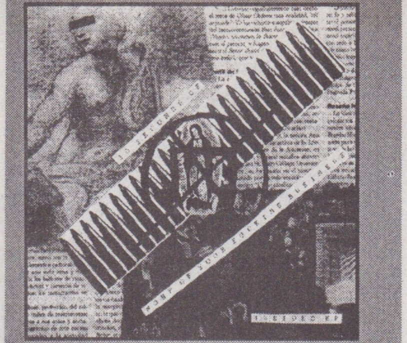
Awesome idea, and executed well; just like the title says...although I think it took a little less than 30 seconds, but who's counting? It's like listening to ANAL CUNT, but without the woman hating homophobic stuff, and it's almost like NOYFB have songs...almost. One side, seven songs, and it's over before you can get your hand away from the turntable. The title of song #6: "Don't You Feel Screwed Paying $3.00 For This Record?" Well, actually, they didn't send a copy to M*RR,* so Tom had to go to the record store and BUY the damn thing, where it cost us $3.48 plus tax. Did we get screwed? I'm not sure yet, I'll have to take another 30 seconds and think about it. (WN)

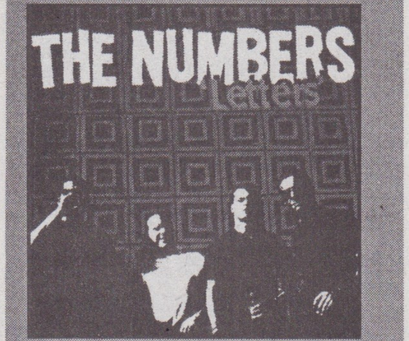
(Perplexing, 21030 Gresham St. #505, Canoga Park, CA 91304, thrashead@socal.rr.com)

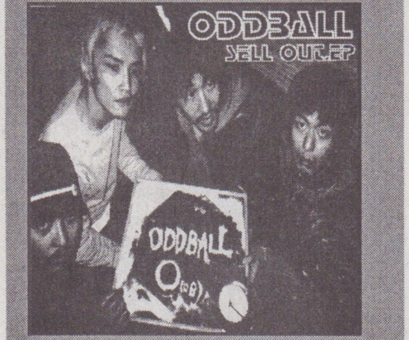
NUMBERS - "Letters" EP

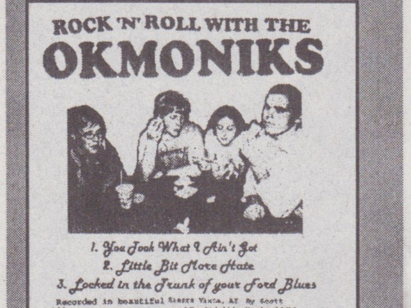
Retro wannabe '77 stuff here, along the ways of the STITCHES and Rip Off type stuff. I like the STITCHES a lot, so this sounds good to me too. A good retro combo amongst the retro masses. (RL)

(Stereodrive, Von-Steuben, str. 17, 48143 Muenster, GERMANY, www.greenhell.de)








ROCK 'N' ROLL WITH THE
OKMONIKS
1. You Took What I Ain't Got
2. Little Bit More Hate
3. Locked in the Trunk of your Ford Blues
Recorded in beautiful Sierra Vista, AZ by Scott
All tunes by the Okmoniks * In-Fidelity Rec's 2001
Special Last Minute Tour Edition of 99 records!

DAS OATH - 9"

Recently the subject of some degree of controversy, the artwork contained in the booklet of this record has gotten it pulled from the Ebullition catalog and has definitely added to the "shock value" of this band. I also found the 12-page booklet filled with oddly juxtaposed pornography a bit disturbing, but that's about it. I think that whatever justification the band may cite, the primary reasoning for the grotesque artwork is the phrase I mentioned above: "shock value." Basically this is the *Korper Kultur* 10" remastered (sounding a bit different) and reissued as a 9". The music is slightly different from past OATH releases with Japanese high-end-feedback-core (EXCLAIM, CHARM, etc.) obviously being a bigger influence. All comments about the artwork aside, I really liked this record musically: extremely high-energy chaotic thrash with such a style and ferocity that the listener feels ready to break into cardiac-arrest. A sure pick for my morning "wake-up" tape. This month's favorite review. (SP)
(Coalition, Newtonstraat 212, 2562 Nenhaag, NETHERLANDS)

ODDBALL - "Sell Out" EP

Mid-tempo punk that is monotone and boring. The vocals consist of nasal singing/screaming and are too low in the mix. The drums sound uninspired and are too high in the mix. On their best song the guitarist plays some interesting hardcore riffs but the rest of it is basic three chord punk. The assishness of the record seems to have much to do with the poor recording. (PA)
(Mangrove, 4-23-5 ACP Bld3F, Koenji Minami Suginamiku, Tokyo 166-0003, JAPAN)

OKMONIKS - "Rock 'n' Roll with the Okmoniks" EP

'60s style garage with lo-fi recording, organs and sweet female vocals make this worth hunting down. Good luck, tho, because there's only 99. (DP)
(In-Fidelity, no address)

OXYMORON - "Feed the Breed" LP

More tuneful street punk from these German punk rockers. True to their "No Future" influences, we get the brit punk anthems in the vein of ABRASIVE WHEELS, ONE WAY SYSTEM, and the BLITZ once again. Nothing original, but decent nevertheless. (RL)
(Knock Out, Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY, www.knock-out.de)

PCP ROADBLOCK - "Live in Californie" EP

PCP ROADBLOCK were one of the very worst bands I have ever seen in my entire life, and somebody though it was a good idea to release a live EP. Great. Total noise that translates a LOT better on vinyl than it did in person. No songs, just drums, noise and yowling. I am sincerely floored that someone put this out. The ride across the Bay Bridge with all of them on acid was kind of interesting though, too bad they can't put THAT on a record...perhaps there's a DVD in the works. (WN)
(Wet Tail, PO Box 4916, Richmond, VA 23220)

THE PEPPERMINTS/ FIREFIGHTERS FOR CHRIST - Split EP

The PEPPERMINTS play sad, droning emo tunes of heartbreak and drunken nostalgia.. Super lo-fi and sweet. FIREFIGHTERS FOR CHRIST are more on the disjointed side of heartbreak, disillusioned and driven by trashy dissonant guitars they sound noisy and almost hillbilly. (JT)
(Pet Set, PMB #204, 827 W. Washington St, San Diego, CA 92103)

PEROXIDE - "Heart Disease" 10"

PEROXIDE was a band that balanced on that line between glam and '77-style punk, and this retrospective offers an accurate portrait of the East Coast outfit. Probably not a major band, they're best represented by their single *Christine* (included here) and their surprisingly good demo from '79, *Fool from the Start...*, which combines stinging guitar with a raw, proto-punk style that recalls the HEARTBREAKERS. A few poorly recorded live tunes fill out the package. Interesting, but primarily for completists. (SS)
(Backstreet, Via Gaetano Caseti 38, 00154 Rome, ITALY)

PHOBIA - "Serenity Through Pain" LP

Back in the '80s when I was an idealistic punk rocker I thought metal ruined punk, and you know what? 15 years later I still feel the same. This LP is fine for what it is, the grindcore kids will be all over it. Great production, great packaging, ferocious guttural vocals with fast and fucking brutal music. Listening to this reminds me of watching NAPALM DEATH and BOLTHROWER in the Barrel Organ in Birmingham and wondering where all the punks had gone. (TB)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510-6911)

THE PILLOCKS - "Got the Edge" CD

Similar to BLANKS 77's earlier stuff, but with tougher vocals. Not bad.(NF)
(Knockout, Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY)

POWER BUTT/ FRANKEN WEENIE - split EP

POWER BUTT are fast spastic (or SPAZZtic) thrash with funny lyrics. With songs about killing scenesters they dislike, jocks, the joys of German hardcore, Mormons, and straightedge revenge fantasies you can't go wrong. Think INFEST with a sense of humor. FRANKEN WEENIE are more of the same with a few songs about skateboarding and hating hippies. Fourteen tracks in total...total fuckin' mayhem ...that is. Limited to 200. (AD)
(Braindead, c/o Franken Weenie 2884 Adrian Circle, Hanford, CA 93230)

THE PRE-TEENS - "Sunday Morning Service" CD

Introspective, slightly emo pop/rock three piece with tough girl vox. (JT)
(11345, PO Box 4948, Berkeley, CA 94704)

PROFESSIONALS - LP

The post-SEX PISTOLS band for Cook and Jones. This boot has been around for years so I'm not sure if it was repressed or some copies resurfaced. A collection of singles and LP tracks if I'm not mistaken or maybe the LP tracks were singles too. Anyway, you will recognize "1,2,3" as the AVENGERS song "Second to None." Steve Jones did produce the AVENGERS at one point. This band is certainly a worthy addition to any Brit punk collection. I just wish there was a legitimate complete PROFESSIONALS collection instead of this ten- track boot. (RL)
(no address)

RAMONES - "R.A.M.O.N.E.S." EP

I've been doing my research and it isn't helping me much.This is obviously a bootleg of a studio recording. The first song, "R.A.M.O.N.E.S." is about the RAMONES and sounds pretty much like you would expect it to. The second song is a cover of the Spiderman theme song which can also be found on one of their live records. "Got a lot to Say" is exactly the same as on the record *Adios Amigos* (one of the few decent songs on an album full of crap). Lastly, "Anyway You Want It" is pretty predictable. If you still care about the RAMONES then I suppose this is worth getting your hands on. (PA)
(no address)

RAMONES - "Teenage Lobotomy" LP

A RAMONES boot. I swear the same RAMONES songs have been fucking repackaged in more ways than Mr.Thorn can fuck with tofu. The problem is there are more ways to prepare an excellent tofu dish than there are RAMONES songs. Seriously, while I can appreciate the RAMONES impact, has their ever been a more overrated band in punk. That being said, if you are a completist you will probably want this collection of demos, live tracks, and alternative versions on nice 180 gram vinyl. Sound quality is decent. (JF)
(no address)

RASKAIPIKA - "Unete Al Kaos" CD

I don't have so much to work off of, since the lyrics and all the words are in Spanish. But the overall I like the music. It sounds a lot like DEAD KENNEDYS at times. The words are sung in a kind of sarcastic tone. It also reminds me of sometimes of newer AFI, but the Glenn Danzig-style "whoas" are matched by equal parts blast beats. This could be called "eclectic," because every once in the while they will break into something totally unexpected. Unfortunately this CD looks fucking terrible. The amount of computer graphics used are a fucking insult. It's pretty good otherwise. (WR)
(W.C. Records, Juan I. Herrero, Apdo. 41019, 28080, Madrid, SPAIN, wc@mixmail.com)

RAZORS EDGE - "Thrash 'Em All" LP

This record is all about really fun Japanese thrash. Oh man! This is fucking rad. It is in the spirit of a lot of the stuff I have heard from Japan lately. There is a lot of rock and roll and straightforward punk rock in their sound, but also really fucking great breakdowns. The lyrics are goofy and do not suck. I can imagine they would be a lot of fun live. A really nicely put together record. (WR)
(CH, 3-6-10 Nakato Hita, Osaka, 531-0071, JAPAN, tagrag@ma3.justnet.ne.jp)

RED LIGHTS FLASH - "And Time Goes By" CD

Solid, melodic political punk from Austria. Though easily comparable to a few Fat Wreck bands, they are solid enough and have enough pinches of creativity to be somewhat respectable. You can tell they like PROPAGANDHI a lot. They are from Austria, so if you're into international stuff, this might be your cup of tea. (SP)
(Household Name, PO Box 12286, London, UK, SW9 6FE)

REVEREND BEAT-MAN & THE UN-BELIEVERS - "Get on Your Knees" CD

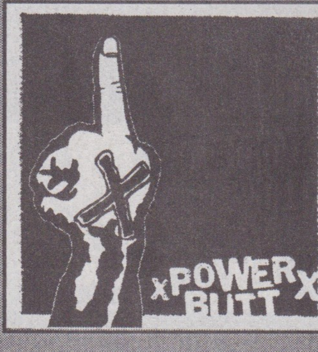
I think LIGHTNING BEAT-MAN is a genius and he proves it again by reinventing himself as the REVEREND BEAT-MAN. After hurting his back during one of his legendary wrestling matches, he was unable to wrestle again. He turned to god to help him through. I know many punk rockers will feel uneasy with their assumptions of the religious aspects of this record. Look at the cover. The preacher has his sleeves rolled, is a smoking a cigarette and wears a truly evil glare. Not to mention songs such as "Fuck You Jesus Fuck You Lord" and "Popcorn Up Your Arse." This isn't any poseur "the church is evil" kind of stuff. All the televangelists in the world will really be freaked out by this. The music great. Garage rock with a bluegrass twang and the Beat-man's always great growly vocals. This is the primitive gospel blues trash. This is the church I'd join. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm, Scheibenstrasse 53, 3014 Bern, SWITZERLAND, info@voodoorhythm.com)

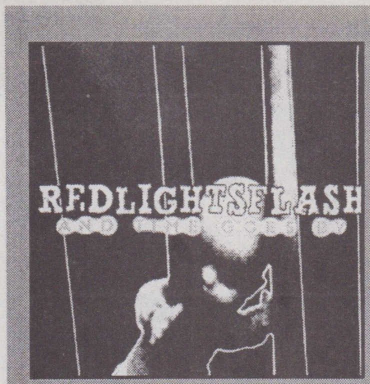
RIISTETYT - "Kuka Valehtelee?" LP

Let's preface this by saying that I consider this classic Finnish band's *Valtion Vankina* required listening. To not know that record, is to admit a serious deficit in your punk vocabulary. That said, this is a sad disappointment, especially given how ripping the EP they released last year was. Don't get me wrong—there are some great tracks on here, but over all something is just lacking. It just seems to suffers from a complete departure of the hectic urgency and raw power that made their early records so crucial. At least there is still that weird echo on the recording that ear marks a lot of

FIREFIGHTERS FOR CHRIST
HAPPY COLUMBUS DAY
monkey wrench
draft dodgers

PCP ROADBLOCK





early Finnish punk. In all honesty, if they had done the respectable thing and put this out under new band name, I'd probably be into it—because it is pretty solid hardcore and better than most stuff coming out these days—but its just not the same band. Search out their early stuff. (MT)
(Fight, Hikivuorenkatu 17 D 36, 33710 Tampere, FINLAND, tomi.minetti@kolumbus.fi)

THE ROSETTES - "Enchantment Under the Sea" LP

The ROSETTES pump up the volume with a German-styled garage/stadium rock n' roll with hints of HELLACOPTERS-ism. With song titles like "Listen to Your Ass," "Fuck You!" and "Devil's Triangle," the songs are venomous yet palatable. However, I have to admit they lose me about 20 seconds into the song. I wish they would have opted to cut some of these songs short instead of over-exercising their guitars. Basically, the songs aren't powerful enough to keep the momentum. Just learn to know when to shut up and things would be much better. (DL)
(Stereodrive!, Von-Steuben-Str. 17, 48143 Muenster, GERMANY)

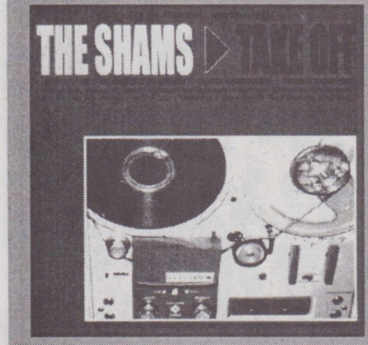
S.O.B. - "Dub Grind" 12"

Pretty weird to see that name again! Had me scrambling for the old classic S.O.B records to check line-ups and figure out what was happening here. Seems to be several (Naoto and Yasue) members of S.O.B who appeared on some of their classic "Don't Be Swindle" and "What's the Truth?" era releases, working a new (?!) style to some effectiveness. There's hints of the old S.O.B, but overall, it's a pretty severe departure from their previous incarnations. Some quick hardcore (which is generally long-winded), some spacey dub (thus the title I guess)-both styles that I would prefer not to associate with the one minute S.O.B that I prefer. Any other band name, I'd be into this more than I am. Use that name, and you've got big shoes to fill. Regardless, it's definitely a solid release-have an open mind (ignore the band name?) and you're stoked. (TM)
(Specialized Fact, no address, JAPAN)

SCARRED
who do you trust?

SCARRED - "Who Do You Trust?" EP

Tons of distortion, metal guitar licks, and angry male vocals create an extremely dirty and noisy atmosphere in your home. Very much influenced by the present events in the US and abroad, these songs are about bombs, warfare, and havoc. (SR)
(SKIT, 142 Whiting Ln, West Hartford, CT 06119, skitrecords@hotmail.com)

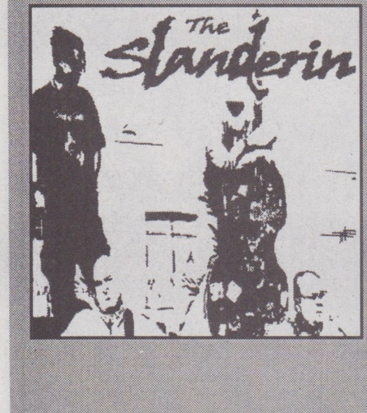


SEVEN DAYS OF SAMSARA/DESTROYER - split EP

This record changes my opinion of SEVEN DAYS OF SAMSARA. I was somewhat unimpressed with their live show a couple years ago. Their two songs on the record are heavy hardcore with hints of both emo (the old meaning that is) and grind. The songs are heavy and brutal but the second one could do with out the guitar solo in the breakdown. DESTROYER suffer from poor recording quality. Their songs are in the vein of mid-'80s hardcore like REAGAN YOUTH, etc. The songs sound like a mess with heavily distorted guitar lightning drumming and screaming that would not be understood without the lyric sheet. (PA)
(Flowerviolence, Kapellenstrasse 16, 69469 Weinheim, Germany, www.flowerviolence.de)

SHAMS - "Take Off" CD

Take of-take it all, all off. I dig the SHAMS far more than I was prepared to-small-minded, prejudiced type that I am. They're fun, they got a good name, and they steer clear of high-minded conceptualism and stick to a drooled and drawled brand of 60s rock 'n' roll, beat and garage (complete with organ). I can see and hear that they've got a weakness for the occasional space-jam that betokens a buried PINK FLOYD influence, but at least it's aesthetically appropriate. (JH)
(Orange, orangerecordings.com)



SICK TERROR/LEGION 666 - split LP

It's so nice when you KNOW you are going to love a record before you even take it out of the sleeve. Brasil's SICK TERROR are phenomenal brutal thrash. These songs pick up right where last year's CD left off, and on their side we get covers of songs by A_AO DIRETA, NO FOR AN ANSWER and NUCLEAR DEATH, along with originals (14 songs in all), that do not let up for even a second. I am so incredibly excited about seeing this band in Brasil this spring. Canada's LEGION 666 are still metal, a fact that brings a smile to my face as the open E intro and the completely blown out recording start off their side of the record. Slow to fast and back again, total down tuned metal hardcore. Awesome stuff once again. And should I mention that there are naked skeleton girls on the cover? Yes, I should. (WN)
(Schizophrenic, 50 Fielding, Cres., Hamilton, Ontario, CANADA L8V 2P5)

SIGN-OFFS - LP

Hold up, If you want the real review of this record skip the first four sentences of the review. Oh man, here goes: Alert! Message to the kids: No more nautical star tattoos, creeper shoes, and pompadour hair-doos. Get on with your lives! I wish the MURDER CITY DEVILS were never born. I can't help but recall some DICTATORS lyrics: "you're such a non-conformist just like everybody else." Sorry fellas, I just had to get that off my chest after looking at the stack of records in the review pile here at *MRR* (....you all look the same!!) Now on with the review: SIGN-OFFS play snotty vocal-styled punk rock in a metal-edged kinda way like GLUCIFER, and the DEAD BOYS mixed with THE CARS ...yet I think they're on the whole "street punk" tip judging by the thank you list (US BOMBS, GC5, etc...). The music's honestly not that bad, it's catchy, and sorta raw, but the pictures of the band ruined it for me....too much Haight street instant-punk "boutique" clothing for my taste. (AS)
(Disaster, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510, disasterecords.com)

THE SLANDERIN - "Zombie Gang" EP

I didn't realize Headline was putting out vinyl now. Cool. Played there once with one of the meanest goddamn hangovers a man can imagine... Anyhow, we have a pretty damn fine record here. Psycho-billie I believe is the tag the kids give these types now-a-days, and the SLANDERIN are one to keep yer eye on. (NF)

(Headline, 7708 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90046)

SMOOTH & GREEDY - "Prison Talk" LP

I was more than just a little worried with this one. The cover is nothing to write home about and, honestly, if it hadn't been assigned to me I probably never would have even picked it up. But sometimes good things happen to dummies like me. You see, while the Swedish might not have any sense of style, they can absolutely deliver when it comes to the punk rock. As with much of the stuff that comes from our Scandinavian friends, this is as much rock as it is punk. That's right, these guys haven't forgotten that it's not punk, it's punk rock. Not only that, but this so catchy, you might even think it was German. But there's more- it's also got a little country/rockabilly tinge to it. (You know, just for the hell of it.) I have my doubts that these guys have ever been to prison, but I'm going to let that go. This is worth going out of your way to find. (KK)

(I Used to Fuck People Like You In Prison, Bissenkamp 17, D-44135, Dortmund, GERMANY)

SMUT PEDDLERS - "Ism" CD

SoCal punk kinda in the style of the STITCHES, but with more of a beach theme. I like some bands from SoCal, but sometimes I just can't identify with the punk rocker as tan surfer guy. "Playstation Generation" is a good song about the influence of the media on the sheep of the world, but then it degenerates into songs about surfing and drugs. Boring. (DP)

(Ransom, 1525 Aviation Blvd., Suite 289, Redondo Beach, CA 90278)

THE SNIVELLING SHITS - "I Can't Come" LP

The SNIVELLING SHITS, of "Terminal Stupid" and "I Can't Come" fame, weigh in with those classics as well as six other archival recordings on this long overdue compilation. Essential for music lovers and music haters alike, the SHITS demonstrate their remarkable musicianship and incredibly intelligent (if sometimes overly cerebral) approach to songwriting throughout. (DD)

(Damaged Goods, no address)

SOCIETIC DEATH SLAUGHTER - "Digital Evil In Your Life" 10"

...or as they are more commonly known, S.D.S. Pummeling Japanese hardcore with a weird fucking robotic tinge on the vocals. Would have been the perfect soundtrack *The Road Warrior*. Picture a barren post-nuclear wasteland, a lone warrior speeding across the vacuous landscape, and this blasting from his tape deck. Excellent. (MT)

(Chelsea)

SOMETHING IN THE WATER - "Submitted For Approval" EP

Rough hardcore from New Jersey that takes an unpolished approach to the guitar driven sound of ECONOCHRIST and N.O.T.A. The main singer has the slurred delivery of the later BORN AGAINST songs. Nasal and heaved out with each breath. A few of the songs get pierced by a low tuned female shriek that gets slightly close to the sounds of SCROTUM GRINDER. This record is as solid as the REAL ONES EP of a few months back and might suffer the same indignity of being flipped past too quickly in the record bin since the sleeve hasn't opted for any easy commercial appeals. Or appeal of any sort! (TH)

(Politically Corrupt, 754 Wood Ave., North Brunswick, NJ 08902)

SOMETIMES WALKING, SOMETIMES RUNNING - "52346" CD

Plenty of the soft/loud dynamic in the five songs. The soft parts are obviously not too ragin', but the intense sections of the songs are up-tempo, anthemic, and aggressive. Crunch and reflection similar in spirit to ALL ELSE FAILED, who I believe are from the same region. There's also hectic, spastic energy, approaching early END OF THE CENTURY PARTY and some of the current Level Plane releases. Lyrics are screamed to the point of breathlessness. Emotional hardcore, there I said it. (TH)

(Traffic Violation, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY 11733)

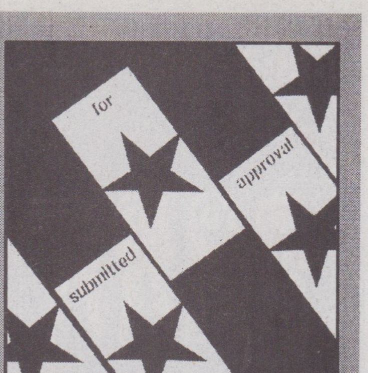
SONS OF LIBERTY - "We Shall Meet Again" EP

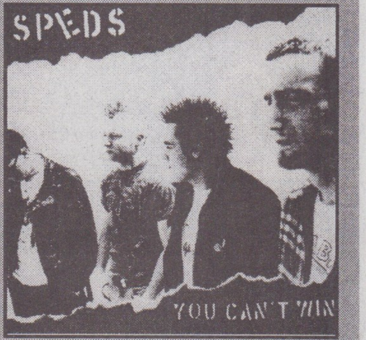
This is the fucking shit! Philadelphia, Pennsylvania has produced another rock-hard skinhead band that brandishes the sword of victory on the battlefield!!! This mixture of tough guys from the Keystone State comes to clear the entire field leaving not one foe standing. Bob and Steve from LIMECELL throw their fury and tempered steel into the fire. Combined with Lon, Mike and Jef, you have got one dangerous group of skins. These four songs are about the trials and the challenges during the most costly war in terms of loss of American men-the Civil War. SONS OF LIBERTY crash through "We Shall Meet Again," "December," and "The Rogues March," before arriving at the most lethal of all their weapons-"Duty's Call." Fucking Brutal!!! These skins cut you deep on this vicious number! This music is ruthless skinhead rock 'n' roll that overwhelms all but the staunchest of men. Fucking great! (BR)

(Dim, (Ullrich Grossmann), Postfach 11, D-96232, Ebersdorf, GERMANY, www.dimrecords.de)

THE SPEDS - "You Can't Win" EP

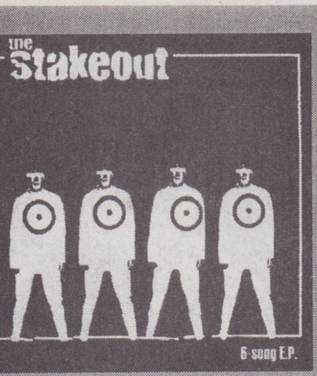
I'm trying to be a li'l less of an asshole in my reviews now, but stuff like this doesn't help



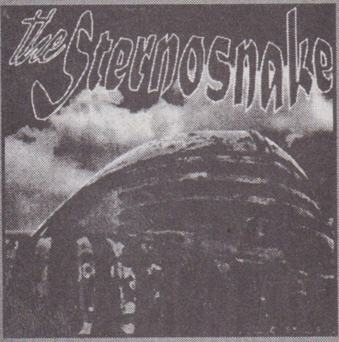


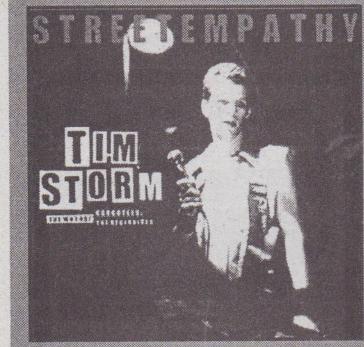
The Spinoffs
Break Out!

THE SPITFIRES
JUKE BOX
JUKE BOX HIGH
(The Spitfires)
THE SPITFIRES
Recorded in Jason's Basement, March 2001
A Juke Box High
B Alone



STEPSISTER & THE STREETWALKIN' CHEETAHS
KEEPIN' IT IN THE FAMILY E.P.





me one bit. Four songs in the CLASH vein that are very "by the books", a tad lifeless, no hooks, and there's basically nothing here that distances them from the pack. (NF)
($3 ppd: 1930 SW 13th St, Portland, OR 97201)

SPINOFFS - "Break Out!" EP
Not bad. Fast paced pop punk Canadian trio. This sounds like Mutant Pop with balls, with unusually high backing vocals. Produced by two members of Canada's emb-ass-adores of rock 'n' roll, Dave Carswell and Jon Collins of the SMUGGLERS. This gets a thumbs up from me. (BM)
(PO Box 31551. Pitt Meadows, B.C., V3Y 2G7, CANADA, thespinoffs@spinoffs.zzn.com, spinoffs.cjb.net)

SPITFIRES - "Jukebox High" EP
The SPITFIRES play MC5-inspired rock complete with tambourines and on their knees noodley lead guitar that I'm such a fan of. The amazing thing is that this was recorded in a basement, but has better sound quality than most of the professionally recorded releases out there. (DP)
(Glazed, PO Box 82006, Columbus, OH 43202, www.glazed.com)

STAGE BOTTLES - 1993-2001 CD
Very strong skinhead music from Germany. I reviewed their *Sometimes Anti-social...Always Anti-fascist* EP a couple of years ago and have always considered them to be the leading Oi band in Europe due to their catchy songs, dual male/female vocals, intelligent lyrics, and vehemently anti-Nazi stance. Unfortunately they have decided to call it a day, which is a shame as there can never be enough anti-fascist bands out there, especially in Europe where neo-Nazi organizing amongst working-class youth is a continual problem. The STAGE BOTTLES had a nice mix of punk, ska, and aggressive pop tunes (not unlike the BLAGGERS ITA, the STRIKE, THOSE UNKNOWN etc) to back up their lyrics, and an off-stage lifestyle dedicated to combating racist ideas and organizing within the scene, the streets, and soccer grounds. I hope that at least one band will rise from their ashes to continue the fight. Comes with a booklet containing the band's history, lyrics, and photographs. The fact that this doesn't have a U.S. release/importer is a shame, try... (AD)
(Insurgence, 2 Bloor St. W. suite 100-184, Toronto, Ontario M4W 3E2, CANADA, www.insurgence.net)

STAGE BOTTLES - "I'll Live My Life!" CD
This oi band is shouting, "Skinheads, hooligans, punks, and others, oh come together." Sort of catchy songs about living the way you want to, working, and fallen friends. I'm not too into the saxophone, but I think it could work all right. (SR)
(Kontro Ogni Barriera, Via N. Mazza 65/B, 37129 Verona, ITALY, kob@bbk.org)

STAGNATION'S END/PARANOIA KEEPS CRAWLING - split LP
The sparse, dove-grey packaging of this LP unwraps to two faces of blistering, downbeat German hardcore. STAGNATIONS END released an LP in '99 and appeared on the *Maximum Subjectivity* comp in '00 with the likes of DS-13, AMEN 81, and FEAR IS THE PATH TO THE DARKSIDE. Now they're back with a mostly heavy, pummeling program that relents just frequently enough to stay tuneful and interesting. The straight-up, rolling drum sound and lighter melodic guitar that shows up in parts work at angles to each other to give this some tooth. PARANOIA KEEPS CRAWLING is very similar in sound, but with the sludge more plentiful and sludgier, and the quick parts less nuanced. Lyrically, both sides tend toward the bleak and discouraged. (AC)
(Civilisation/Sabotage, PO Box 110338, 93016 Regensburg, GERMANY, civilisation-records@web.de)

THE STAKEOUT - "6-Song" EP
Man, this is fucking great. Solid as fuck burly hardcore, shouted backups and NEGATIVE APPROACH Brannon-esque gruff vocals...imagine if BLITZ were a hardcore band from Finland! This is so good that I just listened to it 3 times in a row, I'll be sending my money and I suggest you do, to... (TB)
(Burst of Anger, Sukkulakju 2 A 24, 20100, Turku, FINLAND)

STEPSISTER/THE STREETWALKIN' CHEETAHS - split EP
Whoa folks what is up with the cover art? Damn it looks like an acid induced psychedelic nightmare. Geez! Anyway, STEPSISTER from Cleveland kick out two songs of rockin' and rollin' punk rock. Tony Erba who is from such bands as NINE SHOCKS TERROR and FACE VALUE handles the bass here as he switches gears towards a much more jamming' style that just screams Detroit rock 'n' roll. The STREETWALKIN' CHEETAHS toss in two well recorded live tracks from a radio show. It is more of the same greasy punk that plays so well in dark and dingy punk bars. Listening to this makes me want to go get a bad neck tattoo. (RC)
(Smog Veil, 774 Mays Blvd. #10*454, Incline Village, NV 89451; www.smogveil.com)

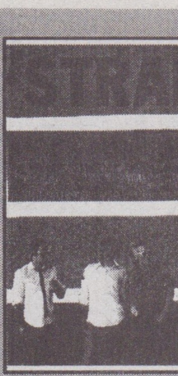
STEPSISTER - "Autopilot Stuck on Get Down" CD
STEPSISTER are some hard-hittin', growlin' mother fuckers. I'm rockin' and you will too, especially if you're into the HOOKERS or NASHVILLE PUSSY. STEPSISTER spit out 11-fast punk n' roll sensations. Fuck it man, I need a beer right now. This is some good shit. Cleveland rocks.(DL)
(Smog Veil, 774 Mays #10-454, Incline Village, NV 89451)

THE STERNOSNAKE - "Ray of Light" EP

This is something very different. It sounds like the band was just jamming one day recorded it and the singer did some spoken word-rap type lyrics to go over it. It's very grating. One of the other *MRR* shitworkers walked in an asked me why I'm grimacing. I don't know. I just can't make sense of it and I want to insist that's a good thing, but I don't know if it really is. (CK)
(Dull City, Marmorveien 14, N-9800 Vadso, NORWAY, gt-john@online.no)

TIM STORM - "Streetempathy" CD

Tim Storm. Yeah, I remember the name. He used to front the GARGOYLES, and I seen 'em at the Kilowatt back when it was still the Clubhouse, Amnesia when it was still the Chatterbox, and Storyville when it was still Brave New World. He's got a solo CD out, now? Erm? Looks like it's got material from the GARGOYLES' San Francisco heyday (they were always a fun act, really over-the-top late-'80s Sympathy rock and favorites of Jeff Bale, I recall), one of the guy's side projects (the WYNOS, getit?) and Austin's RECLUSIVES (who put out a respectable LP on Mortville a year or two back). Check it out if you've an interest in either band, or have been following (JH)
(Myrmecoleo, c/o Kenji Morita, Kaguara-Cho, 7-1 Izumoji, Kita-Ku, Kyoto 603-8136, JAPAN, myrmecoleo.com)



THE STRANGE DIVISION - "Kids Like You and Me" EP

......WOW!!!!!!!!!!!....where are they???...bring 'em all down!!!!....I'll suck all their dicks RIGHT NOW!!!!!!...these guys ROCK!!!!!!!!!!!!....best record I heard this year.....the production here is CRAZY.....loud, crunchy PUNK ROCK!!!!...the guitars are totally over the top loud!!!!!....especially the solos......high end heaven!!!!.....beautiful melodies.....what you got here is a wonderful blend of Pete Townsend's cock, the CREATION's mojo humpty-dumpty, ashes from the CIGARETTES, the head of Kid Reid and all the back seat pussy of the FAST CARS......that's just some of what's in this STRANGE DIVISION.....where are these dudes from?...no info....motherfuckers!!!!....best punk rock picture sleeve I've seen in years....total kitchen table job.....I LOVE IT!!!!!!!! (SW)
(Rubber City, PO Box 8349, Akron, OH 44320)

StREEt
BRATS
SHORT-FUSED
STREET PUNK
EP

STREET BRATS - "Short-Fused Street Punk" EP

Fuck yes! Jake and Charged Records from the Garden State, New Jersey, have another winner in their punk rock stable! The STREET BRATS hail from Chicago-rock n' roll city on the lake-and these fucks came to play! The BRATS start off on side A with a scorcher, "Anger and Angst." The guitars blaze and the vocals ring loud and clear! The bandmates chime in with proper choruses at just the right moment. Side two starts with "I Believe in Nothing," which uses a very effective guitar assault as an introduction. The vocals start out strong and then pick up speed to give you a real shot to the head! This is a good song! Song number three is "War in the City" and this motherfucker kicks a whole lot of punk ass! This is fast and furious punk that any fan of UK SUBS or RIOT SQUAD would appreciate. Damn good record! (BR)
(Charged, PO. Box 157, High Bridge, NJ 08829, www.chargedrecords.com)

This Computer Kills

THIS COMPUTER KILLS - "Sleepwalking Tedium" EP

Quirky non-thrash emo-screamo angularity. Typical drums-in-front! recording style. The vocals make listening to this a chore. I know "singing=sellout" but I'm sick of this screamo style. Adapt. (RW)
(Sedition, PO Box, 18921, Denver, CO 80218)

OUR SCHEDULE IS CHANGE
TOTAL SOUND GROUP
DIRECT ACTION COMMITTEE
TOTAL SOUND GROUP DIRECT ACTION COMMITTEE
CHANGE

TOTAL SOUND GROUP ACTION COMMITTEE - "The Party Platform...Our Schedule Is Change!" CD

Heavy, thick "Party" (as in Party, comrade) rock with some organ whine thrown into the gumbo. Tim Kerr presides as the Young Lion Conspiracy get vague all over your tired ass. The early SOUND is lumpy and propulsive, like a car with square wheels getting pushed down the street. Vocals in pain. A very, very good SMALL FACES cover signals a shift to a more small-p party sound for a few tracks, then it's back to the booty grind. Is it a tribute to pre-hippie-burnout psych flavors? They cover the ATTACK, so maybe. The soul patch is placed strategically as well. I gotta listen to it a couple more times to get over the influences, which dominate. Better than LORD HIGH FIXERS though. (RW)
(Estrus, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227)

TOXIC REASONS - "Independence" LP

Here's one that'll really get your knuckles cracking and teeth grinding together. Funny how easy it is to get the relatively simple three-chords-played-fast formula wrong, and how few bands ever got it right. TOXIC REASON nailed it. I never really followed these boys' career too closely since they were stumbling into their Bullets for You era when I came onto the scene as a young 'un and the glories of their Independence era was behind them. All I gots to say here is that tracks like "Mercenary," "War Hero" and "Noise Boys" are all top-notch not-to-be forgotten American punk with the gravelly appeal of Stiff Little Fingers (a comparison that escaped me way back when). (JH)
(Beer City, PO Box 26035, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0035, www.beercity.com)

UNCURBED - "Punks on Parole" LP

The Swedish party punx are back to swill booze, pillage on the high seas, and lay down some fucking serious ass kicking hardcore that calls upon the ancient masters POISON IDEA for nearly divine alcohol-soaked inspiration. Sixteen tracks of relentless and fist-pounding Swedish

unsane crisis & ekkaia
split cd

punk-with some of the craziest lyrics ever! The perfect soundtrack for your next party after a day of smashing the shit out of some nazis! If you're not down with the party punx, please turn in your record collection now. (MT)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017)

UNSANE CRISIS/EKKIA - split CD

Slap A Ham, Relapse, and Hydra Head records have reached Spain. That is the only thing I can judge by the two bands on this split CD. UNSANE CRISIS play a blazing grindy style that seems to straddle the line between SPAZZ and DISCORDANCE AXIS. EKKIA play a more metallic yet melodic style that recalls some of the Portland bands like REMAINS OF THE DAY. Not bad, but a little to metallic for my taste. (JF)
(La Idea Difusion Libertaria, apdo 18251, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN)

US BOMBS - "Lost In America/Live 2001" LP

A decent live recording of a bunch of old songs. Like most live recordings, it's far from a necessity and for super fans only. Slick packaging too. (NF)
(Disaster, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)

VERY METAL
HIT AND RUN

VAE VICTUS - "Ugly Reflection" LP

Solid, dark hardcore that is no less than all the likely suspects. Mix faster stuff like HIS HERO IS GONE and TRAGEDY with a bit of that DYSTOPIA creep-and-crawl, and a large dose of "bang yer head" groove a la-RORSCHACH, and you can pretty much "feel my flow" (as T-Dog Hopkins would say). This record is long, yet consistently good throughout. (SP)
(Back The Draft, PMB #407, 1442 A Walnut St, Berkeley, CA 94709)

VERY METAL - CD

VERY METAL appear to be a scum-drunk hardcore outfit from St. Louis on Beer City, with a fancy for speedmetal bass riffs. (RY)
(Beer City, PO Box 26035 Milwaukee, WI 53226-0035)

VIRULENT STRAIN
Torture Tools

VIRULENT STRAIN - "Torture Tools" CD

Fast and snotty punky stuff from Boston in the vein of BLACK FORK or to a lesser extent MANKIND? I'd watch'em and would probably be into them if they happened to be on a show that I was at—but I wouldn't go out of my way to see them. (MT)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134)

VIRUS NINE - "What Are You Afraid Of?" CD

Fast and furious streetpunk! Lyrics about the working class, uniting the community, and our fucking government. It's fast, aggressive, catchy, and has some great sing-along potential! (SR)
(A-F, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, www.a-frecords.com)

VISION - "Just Short of Living" CD

Whoa. Makes it two for two this month—"punk" CD's with simply unlistenable vocals. As with the other dud I dealt with-this would be entirely more listenable if the vocalist wasn't trying so hard to sing. Shout, scream, carry on, mumble—anything but this awful crooning stuff! This shares a couple of members from the VISION incarnation of 1992, for what that's worth. Damn. Win some, lose some I guess. (TM)
(Knife or Death, 805 Adele St, Northfield, NJ 08225)

VIRUS★NINE
the CRIMINALS
ALL OUT
WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?
ENDLESS STRUGGLE

ADAM WEST - "Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail" EP

Wow! A MISFITS cover! Obviously a must have. ADAM WEST's originals sound like GLUECIFER or the hoards of other guitar oodling, tempo drivin', macho hard rock head bobbin' bands. Nice hooks and leads. Not a bad version of "Where Eagles Dare," but this EP rocks hard without it. (HM)
(Stereodrive!, Von-steubben-str. 17, 48143 Muenster GERMANY, www.greenhell.de, www.fandangorecs.com/adamwest

WISEGUY - "Pull the Cup" EP

Wow, these guys are full on. Loud, thick, punk ROCK that sounds like it's destined for bigger things. It's a little over-produced, but when bands are this much into their rock, you generally have to choke on a little metal as well. Sometimes it can't be avoided. WISEGUY don't lay the solos on too hard though, it's pretty palatable. If you like upbeat, loud rock you can't go wrong here. Why weren't there bands like this around when I lived in Holland? (AM)
(Stardumb, PO Box 21145, 3001 AC Rotterdam, NETHERLANDS www.stardumbrecords.com)

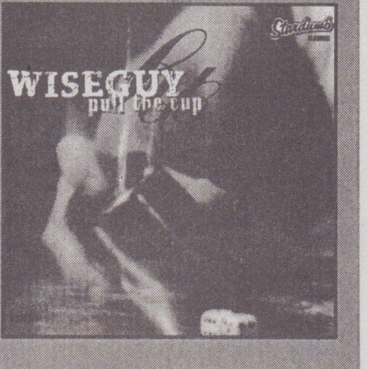
WOLFBRIGADE - "Progression/Regression" LP

For those of you keeping score, WOLFBRIGADE was formerly named WOLFPACK, but changed their name to not be confused with some fascist organization/group in Sweden. Fuck. This is so fucking good—skull crushing, D-beat fueled hardcore that follows in the tradition of bands like ANTI-CIMEX, but mixes in a healthy dose of MOTORHEAD heaviness, and even a tinge of haunting AMEBIX-esque melody. Some of the thickest fucking buzzsaw guitars ever. My favorite of all their releases thus far. Hunt it down or remain the pathetic poseur you are. (MT)
(Farewell c/o Micha Meyer, Gustav-Freytag Str. 18, 47057 Duisburg, GERMANY)

XFILESX - "Beaten Straight" EP

Musically this is pretty straightforward SE hardcore, maybe a little rough around the edges. Lyrically is where it stands out-some of this stuff is hilarious. I can definitely get behind this kind of stuff when they don't take themselves or their scene at all seriously. I guess this is the kind of shit you can come up with when you can redirect the energy you would ordinarily put into having sex. I don't even know what that means, the label guy made me put it in. Anyway, all straight edge punks, buy this record. (AM)

(My Trust, PO Box 274, New Paltz, NY 12561, XalfredX@aol.com)



V/A - "Candy Ass" LP

The review Gods are shining down on me this month...this LP is KILLER. The cover looks like some crummy dance record, but what lies within is some kickass punk rock and thrash. IDOL PUNCH and RAZORS EDGE are the big hitters with frenzied thrash like only these bands can do. SLAPPING BIKINI sound like those old Mystic skatecore bands and even do a song a song called "I Love Nardcore!" DOFJ and SPREAD have a more poppy edge to them but neither relent pacewise, sounding like pop-punk on speed! ABESTIE BOYS sound like a streetpunk SCREECHING WEASEL then bust out a catchy thrasher...This LP is one great band after another, the only clunker is the experimental hip hop of GWASHI which sucks, one out of 20 isn't bad odds. (TB)

(Specialized Fact, 4-28-39, Minami-horie, Nish-ku, Osaka 550-0015, JAPAN)

XFILESX
BEATEN STRAIGHT EP

V/A - "Demonbeach Presents..." LP

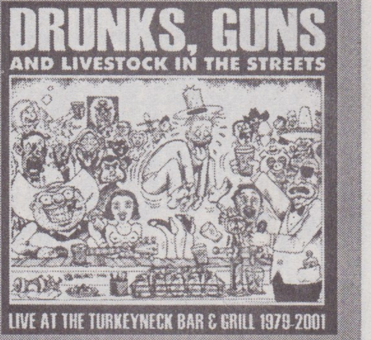
Nine bands here (some doing more than one song) doing the punk 'n' roll and garage trash thing... y'know this would have been a really good split 7" if they just kept the BAD CHECKS and BUTCHWAX. Fuck the other seven bands, slap them on the ass and send them home. These are the only two bands worth mentioning. (BM)

(PO Box 6693, Raleigh, NC 27628-6693, www.demonbeach.com)

V/A - "Drunks, Guns, and Livestock In the Streets...Live at the Turkeyneck Bar and Grill 1979-2001" CD

More fun and games with unruly Australians. The Turkeyneck Bar and Grill has obviously hosted Australia's finest sloppy drunken assholes with instruments and their hoards of loutish, drunken friends and fans. The fun that's been had down there over the years is surely (and literally) criminal. This comp merely grazes the surface I'm sure. You get X, The HYMIES, COSMIC PSYCHOS, the ONYAS, CORPSE GRINDERS and some stuff called SCRUMFEEDER, THEY MIGHT BE VAGINAS, I SPIT ON YOUR GRAVY, the FRED BAND, PEBO BRYSON EXPERIENCE...and several other tempting treats. Disgustingly good. (RY)

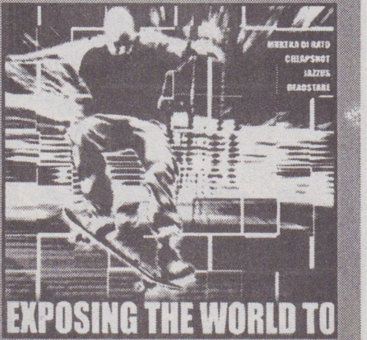
(Turkeyneck, 1/73 Vulture St. West End Qld. 4101, Dist: Corduroy, 38 Advantage Rd. Highett Vic 3190, AUSTRALIA)


DRUNKS, GUNS
AND LIVESTOCK IN THE STREETS
LIVE AT THE TURKEYNECK BAR & GRILL 1979-2001

V/A - "Exposing the World To" CD

This is a damn good compilation exposing some fairly unknown foreign bands to a broader audience. This compilation contains MUKEKA DI RATO and JAZZUS who are from Brazil, and CHEAPSHOT and DEADSTARE, who are from Australia. One of my favorite songs on the comp, surprisingly, was DEADSTARE's cover of a CHARLES BRONSON song. Regardless, all the bands ripped shit up pretty hard with musical styles ranging from buzzsaw punk to screeching grindcore. One thing is for sure, it is all really fast and pissed off. Check this out! (RC)

(Gutless, PO Box 871, St Ives NSW, 2075, AUSTRALIA, gutlessrecords@hotmail.com)



V/A - "Genkai/Entenka Gig-Free Live Compilation" LP

This is all a bit much for me to take in. It's basically a compilation of Japanese bands, most of whom I haven't heard of before. There are twelve bands, and most of them have only one or two songs, and not many of them actually stand out or make much of an impression here. The dominant sound is generic thrash, as played by TOMORROW, IN SANE'N the BRAIN, and STRIKEOUT, but there is variation in the early-'80s sound of ROTARY BEGINNERS, the crusty peace-punk of J.U.U.M., the anthemic street punk of MARTEN'S, the mod-pop of HEADROUND, and the first good emo I've heard in years, from MANIAC HIGH SENSE. They were the surprise hit of the record, mostly because they're the first band of that style that I could actually listen to since RITES OF SPRING. (AM)

(G&E, no address)

V/A - "Meaningful Consolidation.2. and Jungle Unity.3" EP

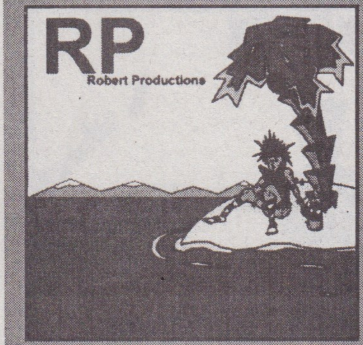
Blurrrr a minute hardcore is given to us hear by the following: Phono Phobia, who are a little to out there for me; SENSELESS APOCALYPSE who destroy us with a fast ditty bookcased by bar crowd noise; RABIA sound like they are recorded in a tin can, and SLIGHT SLAPPERS whose muddy recording cannot hide a couple of blistering songs. Not bad, but not truly great either. (JF)

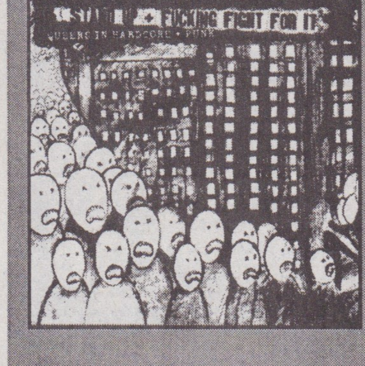
(Blurred, 482-1 naka, Kambasra, Ihara, Shizouka, 421-3213, JAPAN, blurred@thn.ne.jp)

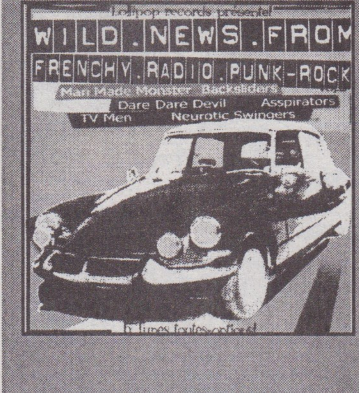
V/A - "One Shot One Kill" LP

Awesome Japanese hardcore comp...four traditional Japcore bands with very distinct styles. WARHEAD are noisy, and very rock, but with uncompromising attitude, they bring to mind older bands like the COMES, with crazy song structure and crazed vocals. EXTINCT GOVERNMENT have been around forever, and they deliver five songs of spikey-haired punk that is unmistakably Japanese. ZONE are faster, with the galloping beat that most people associate with Japcore, and the solos too. Saving the best for last, Tokyo's D.S.B deliver only three songs, but their fury is unmatched

MEANINGFUL CONSOLIDATION 2.
AND
JUNGLE UNITY 3
PHONO PAUPERIA
SLIGHT SLAPPERS
RABIA
SPEED STAR COLLECTION!!




STAND UP + FUCKING FIGHT FOR IT
QUEERS IN HARDCORE + PUNK



by any band this side of GAUZE. Melodic bass lines and punk fucking rock, awesome. You will probably have to mail order this comp, but trust me, it's well worth your time. (WN)
(Overthrow, Maruta-Palace #402, 21-5 Shimoshinshuku Ichikawa, Chiba 272-0102, JAPAN)

V/A - "Robert Productions—1st Annual Punk Rock Compilation" CD

If you have ever been in a band that has been listed in Book Your Own Fucking Life, you know that every day you will receive about 5 peculiar form e-mails. They are basically sent out by these record labels all over who have an idea that they want to put out a CD compilation of a bunch of bands they have never heard, and just take whoever e-mails them back. When the label has accumulated enough bands, they then produce a terrible CD compilation with full color computer artwork and no real purpose. I highly suspect that this CD is one of them. It features tracks by my favorite band of last year, JOHNNY COCK & the NUTS along with bands performing every extreme of mediocre punk/ska/hardcore. The highlights would have to be FALLBACK, FOR INSTANCE, and the PUTRID FLOWERS. A real winner. (WR)
(no address)

V/A - "Sabotage 2001" LP

Damn! A compilation of some punk as fuck Japanese pogo punk bands. YOUNG OFFENDER, YOU'RE DEAD, EMERGENCY, LAW OF THE LAND, TOTAL FORCED, COWARDLY, DON'T CONFINE, PERSECUTION, LAST RIGHT and ULTRA PUNK DROOGS round out the cast that'll kick your balls out yer neck! Perhaps this is the new generation of bands that'll compete with the DISCOCKS, the KICKERS and TOM AND the BOOT BOYS. Buy this shit! (NF)
(Jerk Off, 203, 1-15-20 Kishinosato Higashi, Nishinari-Ku, 557-0042 Osaka, JAPAN)

V/A - "Skullping: A Tribute To Gastunk" LP

Holy shit this is terrible. GASTUNK's song "Devil/Sex" is one of my favorite Japanese hardcore anthems of all time but DESSERT and AGGRESSIVE DOGS' combined cover makes my ears burn with rage. I would say that they deserve to be taken out to field and shot for such an atrocity, but that fate is more suited for band whose name I don't know (it's written in Japanese) which does a ska version of "Running To The Sun." Worth finding only for those of you looking to complete your BALZAC collection (who cover "Sad" decently enough). Worse than the horrendous EMBRACE covers comp from about seven years ago, and those of us who remember that waste of vinyl, know how bad that was. (MT)
(Black Box, TS bldg. 2F, 3-20-2 Hatagaya, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN)

V/A - "Stand Up and Fucking Fight For It, Queers In Hardcore and Punk" CD

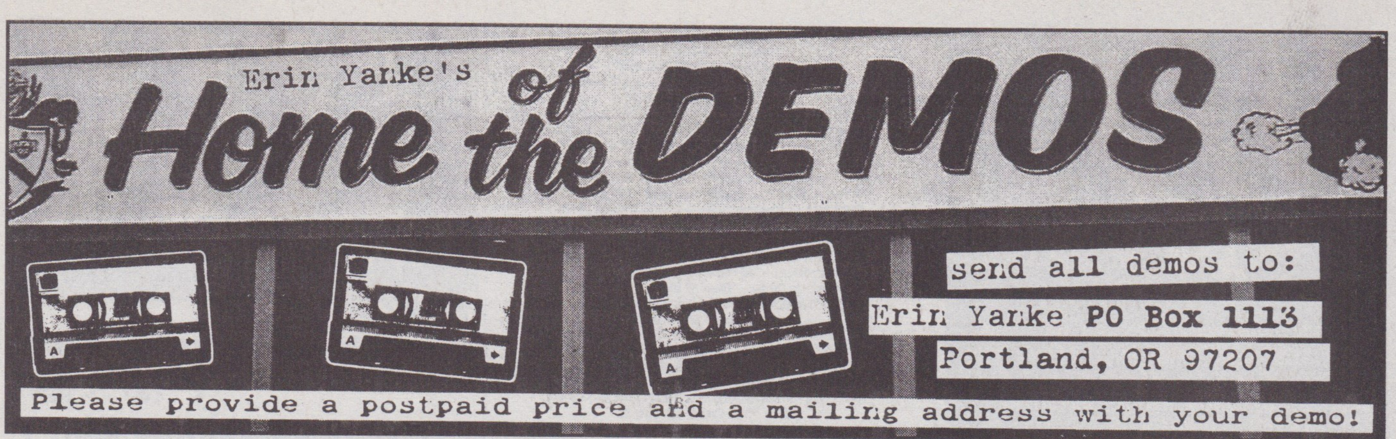
This CD has 15 bands on it. There is a cool drawing on the cover of a crowd of blank white faces with open mouths and pointy teeth, looking totally pissed off as they line up for miles below the cities skyscrapers. Highlights of the CD include MYLES OF DESTRUCTION, who have a creepy fucked up violin winding in and out of scraping hardcore screaming. I'm really into violins in music, it's great to hear people using instruments in different ways instead of always doing the same sort of guitar-cock-rock thing. The HAGGARD with "Hysteria," a great garagey/hardcore/death metal song. Of course I can't understand what they're saying but I'm really into hysteria..Other bands on this comp that you might like are SCOTT FREE, the V AREA, DEATHCHECK, NINJA DEATH SQUAD, the HAIL MARY'S, KIDS LIKE US, LIPKANDY, MOSS, BEST REVENGE, FAGATRON, SKINJOBS, U*S*A*SEXUAL, AND the ROTTON FRUITS. (JT)
(Agitprop, PO Box 748, Hanover, MA 02339, www.agitproprecords.com)

V/A - "Teenage Head" LP

A compilation of current Japanese bands, both known and un-, ranging from rockabilly to various flavors of thrash, stopping at points in between. I gather that what these bands all have in common is that they play the Tokyo's Shinjuku Loft. The inclusion of the likes of ASSFORT, MAD 3, GASOLINE, HONG KONG KNIFE, and FIRST ALERT might interest those who generally eschew comps. (DD)
(Loft, no address)

V/A - "Wild News from Frenchy Radio" EP

This features the likes of six mid-fi garage punk bands: MAN MADE MONSTER, TV MEN, BACKSLIDERS, ASSPIRATORS, NEUROTIC SWINGERS, and DARE DARE DEVIL. Overall it's a pretty fun little release with lots of enthusiasm and attitude. Standouts are the fast and furious DARE DARE DEVIL and the catchy MAN MADE MONSTER. (DL)
(Lollipop, 7 imp. Monsegur -13016 Marseille, FRANCE)



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Once again, much thanks to Doug and Jacqueline for all their help, and all you Europeans be sure to be nice to ATROCIOUS MADNESS. But not too nice, we want them to come home. And this month we have...

A split cassette with **AK 47**, **HATE MAIL KILLERZ**, and **FEARLESS CHIMP**. AK47 have about half crazy crusty low end grindcore style with the low pitched growler guy and the screaming guy, and half samples from pretty weird movies. sometimes the screamer guy sounds like a goat being killed, but maybe that's one of the samples from the porno. HMK's are more energetically spazzy with 2 screaming vocalists, maybe more. They play quick bursts of thrash with little room for anything fancy. FC play at a pace in-between those other 2 bands, although this is a one man band! Lots of growling real close to the mic to get that satan effect, lots of rabid spit fire screaming. ($2 ppd. U.S., $3ppd world. 32 song cassette, only the HMK have a lyric sheet. 69 Newland Court, Lakewood, CO 80226.)

The **BALLAST** demo came at the most perfect time this month, when I needed good angry energetic music that didn't fit into any predictable pattern but has good thrash parts, slow and angry parts, screaming and singing female vocals, and strong back up vocal parts. The package also came with some really cool prints. Comparable to a less shrill ANTI-PRODUCT. (trade or stamps. 11 song cassette, great lyric booklet. 1247 St. Timothee, Montreal, Quebec, H2L 3N5, Canada.)

CHEAP LITTLE TART sounds like a snowed in project, sitting around trapped in the house, cracking bad jokes, putting a beat behind it and recording it for your friends, and the Maximum RocknRoll reading public. Yep, fart and butt humor abound, lots of samples, heckling, and lots of cussing. Self described as "a one man band with extra punk enthusiasm." Accurate! ($3 ppd. 32 song cassette, no lyric sheet. 67 Barclay Road, Clintondale, NY 12515.)

DEAD BY DAWN, in the spectrum of evil blazing hardcore, plays a midtempo and pretty thick version, that is dark with high pitched vocals that are less like spitting and more like puking style, sustained and really from the gut. ($3 ppd. 8 song cassette, lyric sheet. 4914 NE 17th St., Portland, OR 97211.)

DONA MALOAD mostly play early 80's catchy like Southern California, a mix between the faster SOCIAL DISTORTION songs and the early PLUGZ stuff. Sometimes, though, it's pretty fast hardcore. There's a great balance of singing and shout-along vocal parts, and (15 song CD, no lyric sheet. A.P. 10536 Bella Vista, Maracaibo 4002, "A", Venezuela.)

EIGHTY-SIXERS have great LEATHERFACE style, gruff vocals that sound sentimental somehow, and catchy music, full sound without annoying production. It's mostly midpaced, although when they deviate it's mostly busting out with more of a metal guitar sound, that kind of hardcore. Really good. (6 song CD, no lyric sheet. 1434 NE 57th, Portland, OR 97213.)

FEARLESS CHIMP also has their own demo, along with that three way split from earlier. This seems less like a one man band. Really fucking fast paced, the drums do a good job of holding it all together within the wall of noise guitar and lots of incomprehensible screaming. ($2 ppd. U.S., $3ppd world. 10 songs, no lyric sheet. 69 Newland Court, Lakewood, CO 80226.)

FORCED TUMOR are a lofi evil band playing bass driven thrash paced hardcore. Bass driven meaning the bass and snare are the most prominent in the mix, maybe that's recording style instead of playing style. Male and female vocals, spit out in fury. Lots of samples between songs. ($2 ppd. U.S., $3 ppd. world. 12 song cassette, no lyric sheet. 69 Newland Court, Lakewood, CO 80226.)

GIVE UP has a good range of music style going on, some great thrash, some peace punk influence, and some of the heavy side of hardcore with a straining guttural singer. They mix up what they're doing really well. ($3 ppd. 10 song cassette, lyric sheet. 630 Western Ave, 2ond Floor, Albany NY 12203.)

THE GREAT CLEARING OFF mixes up the blazing hardcore, with some slower moodier stuff, and some really slow parts. The vocalist sounds like Nic from THE YAHMOS, same sort of screams and singing parts, but this guy does some spoken stuff over the really slow parts. The over all feel of the demo is on the angry side of emo, including the art. ($3 ppd. 7 song CD, lyric sheet, explanations, and suggested reading and music list. 290 Chestnut St., Hammonton, NJ 08037.)

JÁZZILLA is a band with a split personality. Half the time they have the same guitar sound as THE DOG FACED HERMANS, and the same great frantic pacing, but even with lots going on the songs are immediately engaging and awesome. The vocals are way more punk too, angry but more pointed, less ranty than DFH. Then there's the songs that are total chaos, like being in between 2 radio stations on the am dial. Super percussive with ranting over the bed of noise, and I hear no structure. (6 song CD, no lyric sheet. c/o Philipp Wolohitin, Opochinince 5 - 20, 199106 SPB, Russia.)

MD 20/20 has both a pop and dissonant sound, sometimes moody but they punk it up in an early 80's MISSION OF BURMA kind of way. The singer is more of a throaty DANZIG, though, and in the letter that comes with this tape they
claimed to be a street punk band, so who knows. (9 songs, no lyric sheet, but song explanations. 3609 23rd St., San Francisco, CA 94110.)

REFORM CONTROL play fast paced, driving guitar style, metal tinged thrashy punk rock. Not that real thick produced kind though. Also, the tempo is constant. No breaks for moshing, kids. The vocals are screamed from the high end of the tone charts. ($2 ppd. U.S., $3ppd world. 9 song cassette, no
lyric sheet. 69 Newland Court, Lakewood, CO 80226.)

THE RETARDS play clean jangly thinly produced pop. ADVERSIVES vocal style, with CRINGER guitar, and ska parts that are slower paced than the other songs. (4 song CD, no lyric sheet. P.O. Box 2647, Rugby CV21 3XQ, England.)

SCHOLASTIC DETH is great, thrashy hardcore with a very positive attitude! It's real fast but includes parts that are moshable and/or dancable. The singer is a shouty guy with a bit of melody slipping in here and there, and there are some good wo-wo-wo back up's. This tape includes an e.p. and 4 extra songs for the demo lovers. We thank you. ($3 ppd. 10 song cassette, lyric sheet. 3649 Clement St, San Francsisco, CA 94121.)

SCURVY DOGS are chaotic, like LOS CRUDOS, but with a metal aftertaste. 2 chord thrash progressions that are not immune to the wild call of the guitar solo. The vocals are dead on GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, all the way down to the mid-80's hardcore feel, when they were really angry. (8 song CD, lyric sheet. 530 Divisadero #210, San Francisco, CA 94117.)

SEVENTEENTH CLASS is mostly midpaced and melodic with out being poppy, but sloppy and fun punk. Vocally it's screaming and snotty. They do covers of THE RAMONES, THE MISFITS, and, my favorite of their versions, THE FARTZ. ($1 ppd. 18 song cassette, no lyric sheet. 23 Alger Dr. Rochester, NY 14624.)

STABACADAVER definitely have some FLIPPER fucking with you tendencies, with robot laughter, and slow pretty intros and things, but mostly they play fast lo-fi metallic hardcore with all the vocal range of the muppet family. (11 song cassette, no lyric sheet. 255 Fawn Lake Forest, Hawley, PA 18428.)

TARANTULADA plays really energetic bar rock, fast and a little unpredictable, like a more garage and less stoner STEEL POLE BATHTUB. ($5 ppd. 13 song CD, no lyric sheet. 6201 15th Ave. NW, PMB #270, Seattle, WA 98107-2382.)

TEN TONS OF KILL YOU are a midpaced band that plays half modern thrash style, and half classic punk style, with a singer who really screams his heart out, I bet his face turns red with effort. You can hear him well on some songs, and hardly at all on others. (5 song cassette, no lyric sheet. 724 Wesley Ave., National Park, NJ 08063.)

THE THROWBACKS sound like an electric band with acoustic style, like SONGS FOR EMMA, but without the politics, more like late SOCIAL DISTORTION. They pep it up the third song, but even that has it's slow break down part. (3 song cassette, no lyric sheet. 4302 Division, Los Angeles, CA 90065.)

TUCKERTOWN MOB play what Jacqueline calls Grit-Punk, which is the melodic punk without the saccharine side of things. Vocals sound like Patty from DILLINGER 4, and actually the whole thing is like a sloppy and slightly slower CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE , with more back up vocals. ($6 ppd. 7 song CD, lyric sheet. 24 Harpoon Ln. Yarmouthport, MA 02675.)

Remember about the backlog of demos kids, and remember we can't review demos without a street address, and we don't accept demos, my personal rule, that put god on their thank you list. Happy Birthday Jax.

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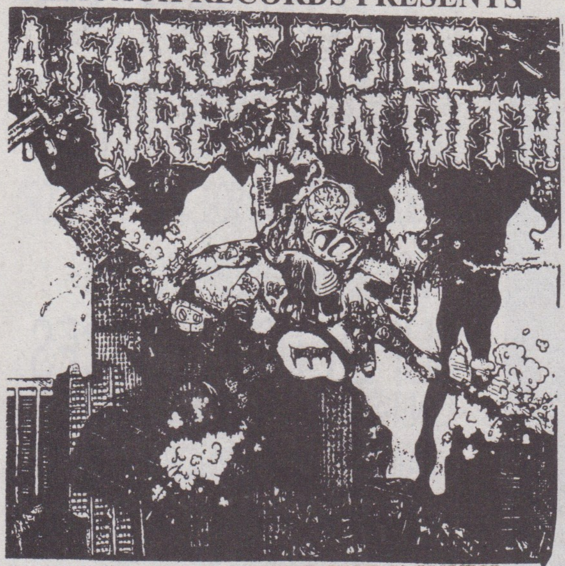
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ADMISSIBLE DECAY #13 / $1
11 x 8 - copied - 4 pgs
This small zine has an interview with the band Totalitär, there is a column, some record reviews and some classifieds. This is an interesting newsletter and it will appeal to those interested in the Central European scene. (HH)
J-P Muikku / Csongrad / Fo U 20-24 . 1/1 / H-6640 / Hungary
jpmuikku@cc.joensuu.fi

ALTERNATIVE WORLD #4 / stamps
11.75 x 8.25 - copied - 8 pgs
Cute little zine from the Brazilian teenage (I'm guessing) underground. Reviews, notices for demonstrations and other events, and poetry. (AC)
Caio Pedron / AL. Dos Oitis / 397-Carapicuiba - SP - Cep 06350-000 / Brazil

ANTIMIDIA #11 / stamps
11.5 x 12.5 - printed - 28 pgs - Portuguese
I believe this big, newsprint format is a new one for *Antimidia*. Because of the clean layout, generous use of large photos and graphics, and numerous ads, it comes off a little like a Brazilian *Suburban Voice*, except, of course, shorter. Interviews for this issue include Mukeka Ai Rato, Good Intentions, and the Underboyz. I enjoyed the coverage of the A Um Passo Do Fim Do Moundo fest in Brazil. (AC)
Caixa Postal 205 / São Paulo - SP - Cep 01059-970 / Brasil

APPLECORE
JOB
#4

APPLECORE #4 / $3
5.75 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
I hate it when I really want to like a zine and then I just don't. *Applecore* sports a nice color cover and looks good...but the contents just didn't do it for me...everything felt too brief and not much in the way of personal flavor. Short columns section (guest columnist Matt Average was the highlight), an essay on Guy Fawkes, DIY guitar repair for complete idiots (finding and fixing fret buzz), interviews with The Mr. T Experience, cartoonist Robb Armstrong, and The Muffs. *Applecore* is rounded out with a quick bit on *Cometbus* as "Fanzine of the Month," Black Flag in the "Parents of Punk" section and a few record/zine reviews. Price listed is for American and Canadian orders...might want to email first if you live elsewhere. (KC)
C/O Spilt Milk / PO Box 2647 / Rugby, Warwickshire CV21 3XQ / England
Applecore_cru@hotmail.com

BANZAI #1 / $1.50
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 22 pgs
This comes with a small comic book. The writer is into Japanese comics, Bis, and thrash bands. Thus, interviews with Jim Mahfood (comic artist), Spazz, and, Bis. Not really my thing. (GF)
Jethro Wall / 2527 Elden Ave #F / Costa Mesa, CA 92627

BEETLE-MANIA! #1 / 75¢
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 48 pgs
It's a zine all about insects! While I am not a fan of the insects, this was an interesting read. The editor realized that she was interested in insects and started to learn about them. Now she is in college studying to be an entomologist. Her goal with the zine is to inform the reader in non-boring scientific terms about the fascinating world of insects. You will never think about honeydew the same way again. So buy the zine and find out what the hell I am alluding too. (DS)
PO Box 280 / Tivoli, NY 12583
wrongsofpassage@hotmail.com

BLACK-CLAD MESSENGER #20 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 36 pgs
This final issue of *BCM* begins with an editorial by John Zerzan, who suggests that prior to *BCM* there had been no social movement for decades in the United States. Hmm, thanks for the history lesson, and nevermind the anti-apartheid movement, or the massive explosion of queer and feminist organizing in the late 1980s and early 1990s that revitalized public activist discourse. But I've never been much of an anarchist. For instance, I don't think primitivism –"a belief in the original state of humanity," which is so bizarre, really, because who really can say what that "original" state entailed in the absence of time travel? -- makes for a viable social agenda in an era of transnationality. This issue is chock full of newsbriefs about the usual suspects: ELF, anarchists, ALF, anarchists, Luddites, and anarchists. There's this weird skewing of proportion – articles about the ALF setting free a slew of ducks or vandalizing a Mickey D's are published next to accounts of hunger strikers in Turkey and the interview with the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan. (MN)
PO Box 11331 / Eugene, OR 97440

BLACK LUNG #7 / $1
11 x 8 - copied - 38 pgs - French

There is lots of the usual stuff in this zine, including interviews with the bands Face Up To It, Tear It Up, Nothing To Prove, Reproach, and Stand As One. There are also gig reviews and also plenty of new record reviews. There are also a couple of columns and a few ads. Not a bad read for a buck! (HH)

Alex Simon / 57 Avenue Du Gal Morand / 91600 Savigny / Orge / France
circlepit@voila.fr

BLN #4 / 1 stamp
8.5 x 14 - copied - 2 pgs

Bicycle articles and rants, mostly set in Texas (did you know there's a San Antonio Critical Mass?) Also reviews of bike zines and books. A must for any bike activist. (NN)

5470 W Military Dr #2715 / San Antonio, TX 78242

BOOK OF LETTERS #15 / $2 (plus $1 postage)
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 46 pgs

Rich Makin's *Book of Letters* is not a new idea—funny, tongue-in-cheek letters sent off to major corporations questioning their business practices with hopes of equally funny responses sent back—but he pulls off richly subversive quips with seemingly mild material. I am especially fond of the letters sent in Haiku form. Rich has found his niche with this zine and has recently published a book compiling his Book(s) of Letters. (SD)

Rich Makin / PO Box 890 / Allston, MA 02134
www.richmakin.org

BROKEN GLASS BARBED WIRE STREET FIGHT #6 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 28 pgs

Hmm, a strange zine that has a fixation on people falling in front of subway cars. But, then again the subtitle of the zine is "The Unpleasantness Issue," so I guess that is fitting. Includes a mildly entertaining interview with Jason Ainsworth, who is an artist. Also has short stories, a guide to Archie comics, and a pretty funny horoscope section. Amusing. (DS)

Rusty Haight / 5-2043 Stainsbury Ave / Vancouver, BC V5N 2M9 Canada
rusty_mf_666@yahoo.com

CHUMPIRE #145 / one stamp
8.5 x 11 - copied - 1 pg (front and back)

I love *Chumpire*! Every time I read it, I fondly remember my subscription to Radio Riot in the early nineties. *Chumpire* is a quick, concise read and it only costs you (dear reader) a measly stamp. You get info on shows, music, politics, education and anything that might be on the mind of Greg (editor extraordinaire) at the moment. Full of wonderful personal flavor and style. This issue includes an interesting bit on children and visual intelligence (kinda scary!). Keep up the great work...this is a true gem! (KC)

Greg / PO Box 680 / Conneaut Lake, PA 16316-0680
chumpire@hotmail.com

CLENCH #4 & 5 / one stamp
8.5 x 11 - copied - 1 pg (front and back)

Those of you familiar with *Clench* know exactly what to expect. Each issue is a one page (front and back) rant about some hardcore band that split up damn near 20 years ago...please take that as a compliment. Number four features DC greats Void, filling in the gaps left by *Clench* #1's focus on Void. Great info, and bit contributed by fans of the band, although I got a little tired of hearing about Charles Bronson's Void worship—who fucking cares? Issue number five is far less crucial adding to the F.U.'s background we saw in *Clench* #2. The majority of this issue comes straight from the TAANG! website, and is written by the F.U.'s Steve Grimes. Pretty self serving, although interesting. Tales of the "old days" and some rather defensive words regarding accusations of the band's nationalist leanings. This issue is good for the half page of contributions from the F.U.'s fans; people who were there. Keep up the great work—what about Hüsker Dü, Phil?! (RC)

Philip A Knowles / 12780 E 2200th St / Atkinson, IL 61235

COMETBUS
#48
$2
BACK TO THE LAND

COFFINCREW #1 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 52 pgs

I'm not too familiar with the bands in this hardcore photo album based out of Chula Vista. But looking through these double-exposed, sometimes blurry photos, I devised a sure fire method of figuring out what these bands sound like: simply combine the sounds of all of the band t-shirts the pictured band is wearing, and voilà, there is your description of the band. Here are a few examples: Happydagger = Morrissey + Dead and Gone; Run For Your Fucking Life = Kill Your Idols + Cowboy shirt twang; Time In Malta = Oasis + a skateboard. Besides a mostly photo content, *Coffincrew* also includes band interviews with Death by Stereo and Over My Dead Body, as well as a few pages of reviews. (SD)

Shaun Stroup / 366 2nd Ave / Chula Vista, CA 91910
coffincrewfanzine@yahoo.com

COMETBUS #48 / $2.50
5.5 x 8.5 - printed - 76 pgs

Oh *Cometbus*, what can I say about this classic zine that inspired me years ago to do my own? This issue is a bit different then the others in the fact that is all interviews. Mainly, the interviews are with people who went back to the land in the 1970s. Aaron talked both to people who were children and people who were adults at the time. What struck me was how so many people thought the revolution was coming to the big cities in the late 1960s—very MC5. The people in *Cometbus* had varying reasons for why they went back to the land, and it was interesting to hear about how hard and boring it was. I thought Aaron had a good mix of people. I would have liked to of read more from the adults about why they went. A very different *Cometbus*, but still a very enjoyable one. (DS)

BBT / PO Box 4279 / Berkeley, CA 94704

DOLL - #174/?
8.5 x 11 - printed - 162 pgs

Sometimes I feel like I give the same review for *Doll* over and over—but fuck it—it's ok that I really only like it for the pictures of Japanese punx and also for the ads. I mean I can't read Japanese so I can only look at the photos to figure out what's going on and without their ads, how else will I keep up on the virtual avalanche of new Japanese records that come out each month!? Features interviews with The Dropkick Murphys, The Mods, Mr. Kite, The Slowmations plus reprints of the *MRR* interview with Manifesto Jukebox and Vitamin X's tour diary. If you see a copy be sure to grab one for yourself! (MT)

#303 Aota Bldg / 3-1-9 Kita, Koenji Minami / Sujinami-ku / Tokyo / Japan

EARQUAKE #78 / $3
8 x 6 - copied - 28 pgs - French

This zine has plenty of zine and record reviews, plus an interview with the band

Combat 84. That is the extent of this issue, nevertheless, it's still worth checking out. (HH)
Frederic Leca / 55 rue St. Jean / 88300 Neufchateau / France
xearquake@aol.com

EQUILIBRIO PRECARIO #6 / $5
11 x 8 - printed - 80 pgs - Italian
I have not reviewed this zine in a long time and must admit it has drastically improved. Better said, it is not so raw. This issue features the bands Old Time Relijun, Rollerball, 90 Day Men, and Calla. There are also plenty of new record reviews, a few ads, and finally some brief articles on bands from the past. Although this zine may appear bizarre to English-only speakers, the zine actually covers some pretty interesting Euro bands. And of course the damn thing came with a CD sampler that would not play on my CD player, although it registered time running. Go figure! (HH)
Stefano Paternoster / via Cembra 49/2 / 38015 Lavis (TN) / Italy
inequilibrio@tin.it

K
I
S
S
-kiss off-
O
F
F
FANZINE
number seven

FEAR MY NERVES #0 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 15 pgs
Short interviews with Selfish and Cosmic Goblins, and some rambling thoughts on anarchy and revolution written in pretty obtuse college babble. (GF)
9b, Lorn Rd / SW9 OAB / London, UK

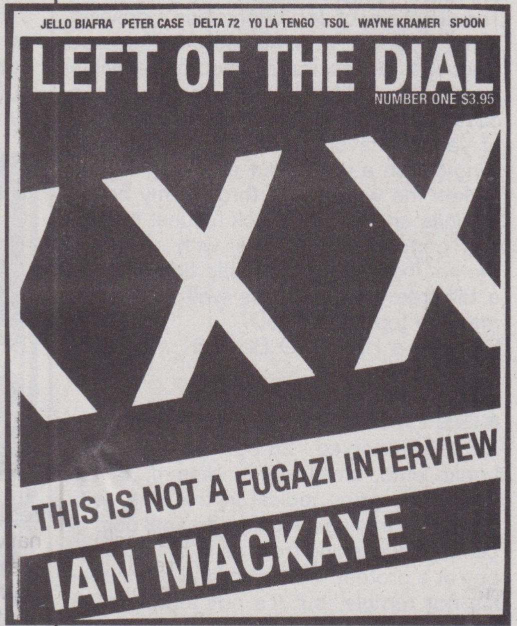
FRACTURE #19 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 88 pgs
Hey look! It's everyone's favorite zine from the UK! This time around we've got interviews with Bad Religion, Jello Biafra (probably the most annoying read—how much more self obsessed can one person get?), The Lapse, Consumed, The (International) Noise Conspiracy (yawn—Dennis, please go back to doing Final Exit, that was your good band.), and of course an interview with Fugazi about their new album. This time around the columns were my favorite part as I don't really relate to—nor do I currently enjoy any of the bands interviewed. I did miss Sean Wat Tyler's column though…overall good stuff and for those of you into the bands interviewed, think of this as virtual buffet of goodness. (MT)
PO Box 623 / Cardiff, CF3 4ZA / Wales / UK
www.seanchai.dircon.co.uk

GARAGELAND #5 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 28 pgs
Garageland is a garage rock fanzine. This issue is a tribute to the Ramones, featuring a few photos from 1979, writings, an overview/review of their discography, and some personal memories. Also included is an interview with Tura Satana (of Faster Pussycat, Kill! Kill! fame), a short Panic Buttons tour (beer) diary, and two bad movie reviews. Sparse layout, spelling errors, not really my cup of tea, but good for what it is...um, yeah. (KC)
1219 McKinley Ave / Huntsville, AL 35801

GIDEON #2 / $1 or trade
8.5 x 4.5 - copied - 32 pgs
Gideon is a charming personal fanzine, both wonderfully designed (I can't get enough of the fuzzed-out photocopier art) and achingly composed in lovely prose. Stories about the boy with the Morrissey hair, new neighborhoods, graveyard shifts, psychic typewriters, "poisons and prisons," and personal reflections fill the pages of this artful creation. The movingly claustrophobic centerpiece of this fanzine is a series of "chapters" about Milford, Michigan, and the dark secrets and acts of violence that fester in this particular small town.
(MN)
Abiology Press/ PO Box 82483 / Columbus, OH 43202

GULLIBLE # 23 / $2
7 x 8.5 - copied - 38 pgs
Oh yeah, *Gullible* is damn good. I knew that I'd like this because I have a huge soft spot in my heart for Richmond, VA...combine that with the fact that Chris Terry knows how to write and you've got two great tastes that taste great together! Personal tales of tour, stolen bicycles, drunken nights propped up on the porch, special back alley routes through town, observations on the inner workings of family, a temporarily mute band mate (and learning the value of comfortable silences), a few easy veggie/vegan recipes, some essays on Henry Miller/Charles Bukowski/Jack Kerouac, and a little jinx removing. Fucking great. The bonus is a quick little guide to fun stuff in Richmond (record store scores, hot river spots, good grub, scenic smooching sights). *Gullible* is a fabulous way to spend a few hours of quality reading time...descriptive, introspective, all around good stuff. My pick of the month...maybe it'll be yours...c'mon, send this kid some cash! (KC)
Chris Terry / PO Box 4909 / Richmond, VA 23220
S2cterry@atlas.vcu.edu

HOLY SHIT #2 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 56 pgs
All you Christians should beware of this zine. The editor is claiming Christ but many of the people he talks to clearly are going straight to hell! One guy says Hare Krishna can "work" for some people—you'll find out different on judgment day, buddy! Some secular readers may be drawn to the interviews, which have a focus on teaching (and hardcore) and come off pretty well. The editor talks with Rob Pennington, David from Stretch Armstrong, Leigh from the Assistant, and Scott from Blue Skies Burning. Also there's writing about his life and the More Than Music fest. One essay, "On Democracy," reflects the editor's amazement that a house full of Christians, affiliated with an expensive Christian college, were allowed to slide on a zoning infraction. The town government was concerned about violating the rich Christians right to religious liberty! Finally, there's some justice in America. There is a long, boring section on the editor's student teaching, some music reviews and no ads. (JM)
This zine awaits you in heaven.


JELLO BIAFRA PETER CASE DELTA 72 YO LA TENGO TSOL WAYNE KRAMER SPOON
LEFT OF THE DIAL
NUMBER ONE $3.95
XX
THIS IS NOT A FUGAZI INTERVIEW
IAN MACKAYE

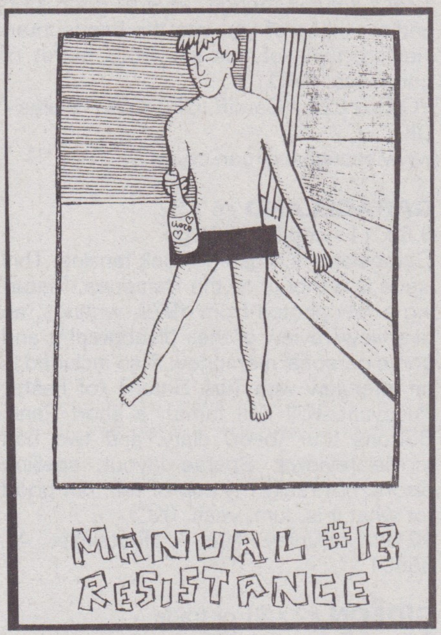
IMAGINE #4 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - printed - 68 pgs
The obvious comparison here would be with *The Match*. Imagine is concerned with issues of "ethical" and individualist anarchism, and the editor doggedly explains his philosophy and his skepticism towards the society we live in as well as many efforts to change it. Not quite as rhetorically practiced as Fred Woodworth (hey, it's only issue #4), but also a little less frustrated and a little more hopeful. This issue looks at the Patriot Act and it's effect on freedom, Taoism: its different translations and its similarities to anarchist philosophy, "supernatural" phenomena, lots of letters-page back-and-forth, and much more. I look forward to this zine which gets better with every issue. (GZ)
PO Box 8145 / Reno, NV 89507
imaginezine@hotmail.com

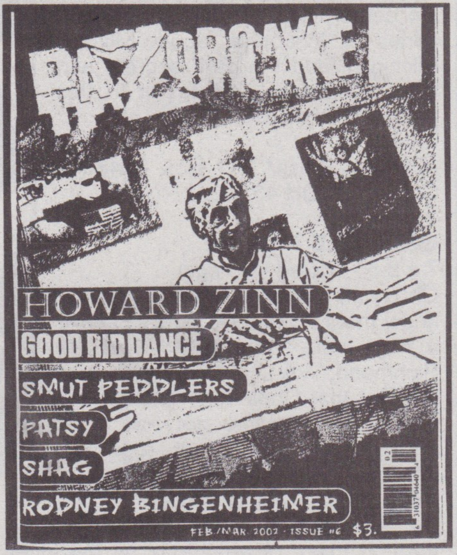
JADED IN CHICAGO #13 / $2
8.5 x 11 - printed - 40 pgs
Mostly interviews (which are substantial) and features on the Chicago scene. Also some political articles and music reviews. It's nicely laid out, and the writing's good, so I recommend it if you like Rise Against, Plain White T's, Haymarket Riot, The Fairlanes, Saves the Day, or are interested in Chicago punk in general. (NN)
4031 Forest Ave / Western Springs, IL 60558
JadedNChi@aol.com

KING-CAT COMICS #60 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
The simplicity of John Porcellino's drawing style, coupled with his delicate, sparse language makes for a smooth, readable comic. Porcellino has been allowing a casual glimpse into his world for a number of years. I haven't picked up an issue of *King-Cat* in a while, but reading this one makes me want to go through my boxes of zines and pull out back issues. No. 60 has comics and stories with a nature theme, including a traumatic tick tale and a tall tree adventure, as well as a summertime top 40 list. (SD)
Spit and a Half / PO Box 881 / Elgin, IL 60121

KISS OFF # 7 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 28 pgs
Looks emo, smells emo...hmmm...tastes emo. Emo goes radical in this one, with the editor tracing his own personal path of political awakening from band boy to band boy at a protest. I'm being kind of mean—it's not terrible, but it's not terribly compelling either. Chris describes his experiences at various demonstrations, but there's a certain sense of detachment from the whole thing that leaves the reader wondering if the writer knew why he was there. I'm sure he has good intentions, I just didn't really get it. (MD)
Chris Kiss / 7-306 Frank Street / Ottawa, Ontario / Canada K2P 0X8

LEFT OF THE DIAL #1 / $3.95 (plus postage)
8.4 x 10.9 - printed - 84 pgs
Should you find yourself killing time in Tower Records or some such, you could do worse than reading the interviews in here. I was cynical because those spoken with are all "big names," but the editor is very knowledgeable and did a great job. Ian's name is big on the cover and also heard from are Gregg Turner, Gary Floyd, J. Biafra, Wayne Kramer, and a number of other-than-punk recording artists. I could not in good conscience recommend any publication with a contribution from Gina Arnold, nor would I personally invest $4 in this here rag, but I did end up stoked on the quality interviews. (JM)
1438 W. Alabama #4 / Houston, TX 77006
leftofthedialmag@hotmail.com





MADICINE #99 / $3
8 x 6 - printed - 72 pgs - German
Hey, this is my pick for zine of the month, then again those sexy girl covers always win over my affection. All humor aside, this is a damn funny zine with lots of cool graphics including the centerfold, Kill Smurf City. Included are articles on Holly Golightly, Motorhead, the Fokkewolf vs the Spitfires, Tumbleweed Records, Surviving Madrid and much more. There are also plenty of zine and record reviews. And to top it all off, the zine comes with a 7". Definitely a cool zine worth checking out. (HH)
Carsten Pieper / Ostfriesenweg 32 / 26441 Jever / Germany
www.fickengratis.de

MANUAL RESISTANCE #13 / $1 & stamps
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
Matty's life is full of drinking, scamming, writing, and punking, but this zine is more about reflecting upon that lifestyle as opposed to describing it moment by moment. The tone can be almost poetic (in a good way) at times, as he tries to distill the important parts of punk for all of us. Besides the above, *MR* includes a history of Matty's jobs, a ponder on the meaning of art, and the obligatory letter to someone who betrayed him. Mostly I liked this, though at times it borrows a little heavily from the *Cometbus* genre. (GZ)
PO Box 13105 / Gainesville, FL 32604

MEGABEEF #7 / $?
7 x 9 - copied - 32 pgs
Glad to see the humor zine is not dead. I found this zine to be very enjoyable; it's just kinda goofy. Includes observations about a trip to Europe, record reviews, and weird stuff you can order from catalogs. Also talks about a place called Tippy Tacos, which sounded pretty great. (DS)
PO Box 16281 / Alexandria, VA 22302
will@handstandrecords.com

OCEANS OF YOUR EYES #1 / $1 (plus postage)
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
Like you couldn't guess from the title, this is filled with sappy, dull, emo writing. He loves his girlfriend and argues drunk with dudes in the dorm. He feels bad, but he's happy with her. He's bummed he doesn't get Easter candy any more. There's also poetry. (JM)
PO Box 1061 / Iowa City, IA 52244

OX #45 / $6
11 x 8 - printed - 156 pgs - German
Absolutely tons of punk rock in this always bigger zine. This issue includes interviews with Fugazi, Bad Religion, International Noise Conspiracy, Neurosis, Zodiac Killers, and more. There are also plenty of columns, loads of gig and record reviews, more ads than one has money for, and finally, a great review of inde-

pendent films. Nothing more to write except this zine will fill you in on what punk music is today. Oh yeah, the zine comes with a CD sampler featuring 29 bands. (HH)

PO Box 102225 / 42766 Haan / Germany
www.ox-fanzine.de

PUNK IS LIKE A BOX OF CANDY #1 / $2
3.5 X 4 - copied - 40 pgs

This is a really cool biographical sketch of how a woman became excited about punk as a little kid, grew to appreciate it's aesthetic, became involved in it's politics, became disillusioned by it's shortcomings, drifted out of the scene, and sort of became excited once again by it's potential. The story follows her from childhood through to adulthood, but isn't simply a retrospective. It is a call to arms to punks everywhere to make punk mean something, to address the gender and cultural retardation that has solidified punk as a white boys club. It is a critical analysis of how the roles we play, or fail to play define what punk is. The zine isn't heavy handed or detached, its analysis is personal and emotional. In many ways, it's the zine we all should and could write. The story of why we became punk, what it means to us, and what we need to do to make it fit our hopes. Everyone should read it and get inspired to tell their story and figure out their place in punk. (CR)

satanmacnuggit@hotmail.com

QUICK #1 / $3
8.5 x 11 - copied - 50 pgs

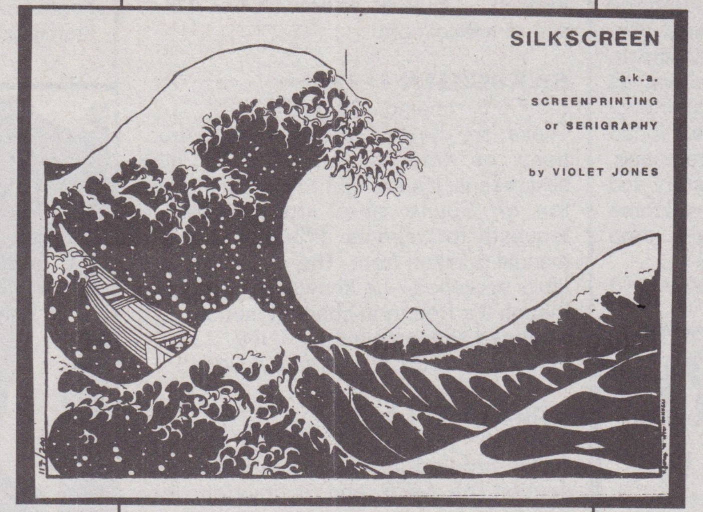
I really liked parts of this zine because it is written in a sort of academic/ theoretical language style that I am familiar with and resembles most of what I have to read as a student. Issues addressed include ecology, environmentalism, cultural survival, and issues of modernity and post-modernity as it relates to identity and culture. The author relates the theoretical issues to his personal history and experiences in an interesting way. On the negative side, *Quick* was difficult for me to read in terms of style, layout, and font size. It was a lot of information and text crammed into the pages. It also seemed way too abstract at times, bordering on totally pretentious. Overall, stimulating, thought-provoking, and worth reading. (JL)

Mike / 34 Park Blvd. / Ontario / M8W 1G8 Canada

RAZORCAKE #6 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 100 pgs

Looks like those ex-*Flipside* folx are finally picking up some steam—as they put out what is my favorite issue so far of this L.A. based punk zine. Worth getting, if for nothing else, Todd's excellent interview with Howard Zinn. A solid and informative read. The Good Riddance interview was good too, even though I've never cared for them as a band musically. Bad points would be the, what could have been better, interview with Rodney (on the ROQ) Bingenheimer. Asking him about punk these days is sort of like asking Hilley Kristal (from CBGB's). These people are totally irrelevant at this point as to what is going on now in punk. Interviewing them is just like interviewing The Rolling Stones and asking them about shit that goes on now—they have no clue. Overall this is the strongest issue yet from these folx—and for sure fills a void in the world of punk rock coverage. I might not always agree with them but I totally support what they do and you should too. (MT)

PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042
www.razorcake.com



SUMMER'S OVER #8
still free

REASON TO BELIEVE #4 / $1
8.5 x 11 - printed - 76 pgs

This has all the necessary elements of a great music zine—a variety of international music coverage, lots of reviews, interviews, personal writings and political bits. To get specific, we've got: a travel diary; an account of the Gotenburg Riots; interviews with Coche Bomba, Guerillavision, Triple H, Newborn, and Ilegal zine; an article on "greener" car driving; scene reports; and loads of music, book, and zine reviews. The music covered is of the hc/rock/punk genre. It's nice to see a little section on "Wimmin in DIY" but it would be nice if someday women could just make up a significant amount of what's covered and not just be delegated a page where they can answer only gender specific questions (we like to talk about our gear and our scenes and our influences too, not just what it's like to be a woman in the punk scene). (MD)

145-149 Cardigan Rd / Leeds / LS6 1LI UK.

REBEL GRRRL #1 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 48 pgs

This is a riot grrl revival zine (in case the title didn't tip you off), giddy and earnest as you might expect. Initially I thought I'd be bored, seeing these themes yet again, but unfortunately things haven't changed much and what they write about is still very relevant. Even though it seems to be a lot of preaching to the converted (from my perspective), that ain't so bad since even we converts are still continually bombarded with negative messages, which are easy to internalize regardless of feminist indoctrination. So my point is to get this zine and support their work, whether you're newly excited about feminism or even if you've gotten over the giddy stage. (NN)

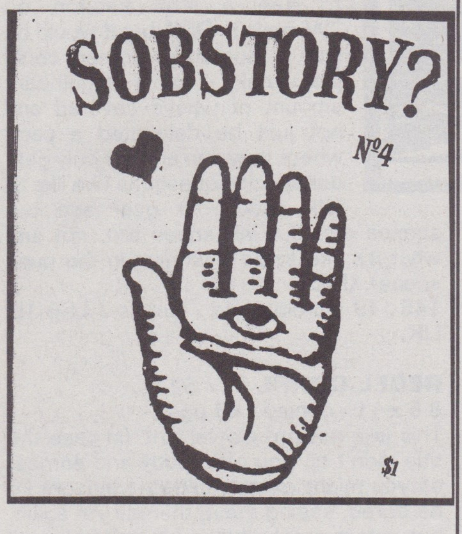
6167 N Broadway #417 / Chicago, IL 60660
rebelgrrrlzine@bust.com

RETAIL WHORE #5 / $2
5.5 x 8 - copied - 36 pgs

If I ever go to Chicago, *Retail Whore*'s guide to bar will come in handy, particularly in avoiding hipster and yuppie bars. Most of the zine consists of being… well a retail whore at Border's, the Virgin Megastore, and Kinko's. The crappy job triumvirate. As well as a lot of writing on the practical affects of depression. The writing is good, the stories are interesting, but some layout problems kinda make it difficult to read some of it. (CR)

c/o K Raz / 5741 N Ridge #3 NE / Chicago, IL 60660

ROUNDTRIP #1 / $2
11 x 17 - copied - 12 pgs
Rachel created this zine/calendar as a sort of autobiographical/biographical memoir describing her relationship with her deceased grandfather, his funeral, and her thoughts about American Jewish identity across generations. I could relate to the tone of this zine in a personal way as my family shares some of the characteristics of Rachel's in terms of culture. I found this to be a very readable, interesting, original way of telling a personal story and relating it to a reader. A very welcome departure from the usual emo journal/diary narrative mode. (JL)
3269 25th St / San Francisco, CA 94110



SAVAGE AMUSEMENT #15 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied -12 pgs
An anti-war oi zine filled with album and show reviews. Lots of that cute/tough Brit slang and lots of opinions. Some pages were copied upside down, but maybe that was just my copy. I actually enjoyed this a lot. (GZ)
T Howarth / Rosehill / 20 Front Street / Tanfield Lea, Stanley / Co. Durham, DH9 9LY England
Trevhagl@hotmail.com

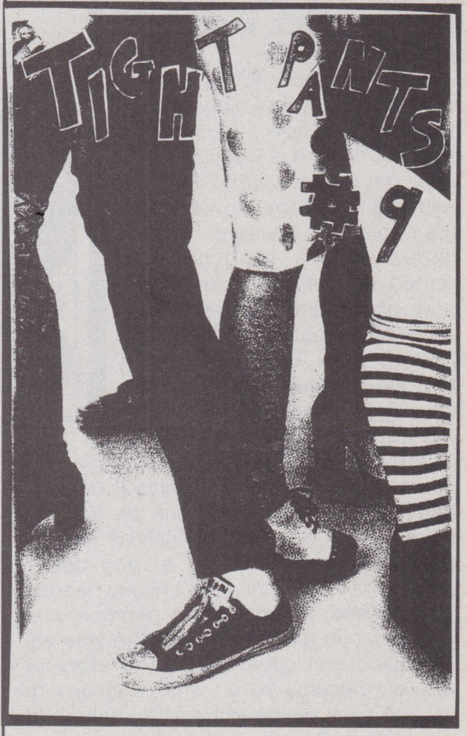
SCANNER #11 / £1.50 or $3
5 .75 x 8.25 - printed - 84 pgs
By no means has it evened out, but this month I received several zines with great interviews, *Scanner* not least among them. If you love the Freeze, you pretty much have to get this, as their complete history is laid out in great detail by their tweaker singer. Some of his stories of amphetamine paranoia are too fucking funny, and he also provides some critical insight into the early Boston hardcore scene. There are shorter but still good talks with Leftover Crack, Ramsey from AK Press, The Dickies, and Manifesto Jukebox. The columns mostly are pretty weak but there is a bunch of writing on film and an interesting biographical sketch of Toulouse-Lautrec. Also included are ads and reviews. The print in here is pretty small and there is a ton of writing. Great job. (JM)
6 Chatsworth Dr / Rushmere Park / Ipswich / Suffolk / IP4 5XA / UK / scanzine@aol.com

SILKSCREEN #1 / free
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
These are beyond rudimentary instructions on how to make really nice silkscreens. It's brought to you by the editor of *Spunk* zine, after numerous requests for reprints of the article this manual is taken from. The cover is beautifully screened—he knows his shit. Even though it's free, non-check donations are accepted and encouraged. (NN)
PO Box 55336 / Hayward, CA 94545

SOBSTORY? #4 / $1
4.5 x 5.5 - printed - 40 pgs
I once ordered this zine from the review section of *MRR* and it mysteriously arrived in my review bin here. It took me a few minutes to realize that the editor of Sobstory? was then a coordinator of *MRR* and a friend of mine. I had no idea he did such a great zine. Well now Andrew has moved on from *MRR* but still puts out a great zine. This includes some travel stories and some of his columns from *MRR*. While the content is good, one cannot pass up a chance to read about his skateboarding accident again. Not for the squeamish. Of course the story about the jar of pasta sauce is a good one too. So support the *MRR* alumni and order this zine. (DS)
PO Box 170247 / San Francisco, CA 94117

SPEW BURRITO CHUNKS #2 / $1 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 28 pgs
This dude shares tidbits with us about a variety of subjects including information about Yerba Mate, anarchism, human relationships, and notions of mental health. A lot of the contents are reprinted from other zines or literature which I always find kind of annoying unless something is really striking or amazing and needs to be regurgitated. I enjoyed the facts that this zine approached things with humor merged with things that were clearly of personal importance to the author. The fact that so much of it was reprinted was really irritating and for me, weakened the zine. I think that the author could have shared more of his personal analysis of the world instead of just spitting out what has already been said and repeated too many times. (JL)
Eryk / 938 W. 3rd Ave. / Eugene, OR 97402

STAR CLUB #4 / 3 EU
11.75 x 8.25 - copied - 24 pgs - French
This is a Krishna straightedge zine with little to offer. The editor interviews French band H2Oil, rapper David S., and Good Clean Fun, who mercilessly teases him, much to my amusement. (AC)
10 allée des plantes vives / 21121 Fontaine-les-Dijon / France
starclubzine@hotmail.com



SUBURBAN VOICE #45 / $5 / $6 Canada / $8 World
8.5 x 11 - printed - 132 pgs
I tell you, *Suburban Voice* is one of the few zines going around these days that I actually get really excited about when I hear a new issue is out. Al's been at this forever—over 15 years—but his heart still lies deep in the underground and is more in touch with what's going on with punk these days than most snotty nosed punx half his age. Well done interviews with Crispus Attucks, Deathreat, Last In Line, Life's Halt, Tear It Up and The Unseen to name a few. Plus a mountain of reviews and well written columns. Hey this comes with a CD that was reviewed last month with all the likes of Dillinger Four, Vitamin X, Limp Wrist, F-Minus, Esperanza, Balance Of Terror and a shitload more. Required reading if you want to have a clue about punk these days. (MT)
PO Box 2746 / Lynn, MA 01903-2746
suburbanvoice2002@yahoo.com

SUMMER'S OVER #8 / free or trade
8.5 x 4.5 - copied - 20 pgs
An unremarkable contribution-driven, personal fanzine with, I think, cover art commemorating The Hulk. Small stories about everyday events in retail, tall people, and ricotta cheese are inoffensive but not too

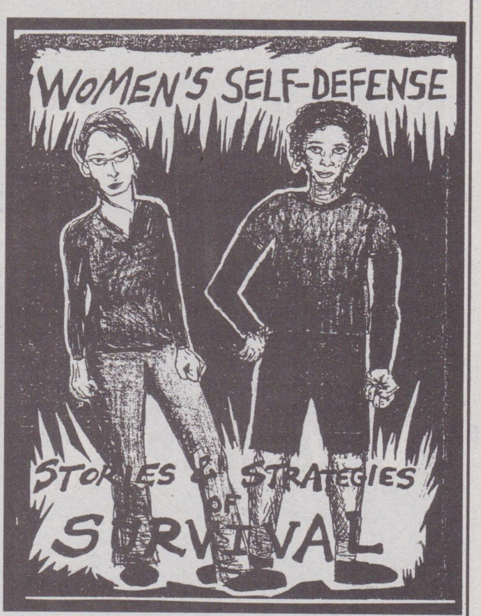
interesting either. I couldn't read the handwritten essays, sorry. (MN)
Mitch / 210 9th Ave S / St Cloud, MN 56301

TIGHT PANTS #9 / $1
5.5 X 8 - copied - 68 pgs
After years of reading zines, I think I have found what is my absolute favorite. This is not to say that there are not other really great zines out there, but none are put out with the same constant quality of *Tight Pants*. The combination of punk, politics, Russian literature and humor, blend together like soymilk and cereal. (That means it goes together well). This issue contains an in depth analysis of the role emo played in the attacks on the WTC, (Burning Airlines, carrying around suspicious backpacks, etc...), crappy jobs that don't seem too crappy, vanguardist spelling sects, and the usual couple of pages dedicated to porn and cereal. The best part of TP, is the pull out review section that can be discarded after one use. The best! (CR)
918 17th St / Apt #1 / Minneapolis, MN

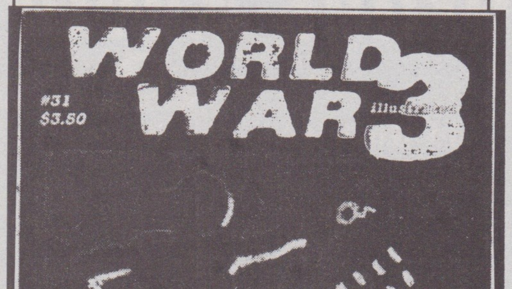
TURNING THE TIDE vol. 14, #4 / $?
11 x 17 - printed - 16 pgs
Published by People Against Racist Terror, this anti-racist newsletter has a number of things to recommend it. A long article by Sonja Sivesind about racism and privilege in groups organizing for the Seattle WTO events is the highlight of this issue, but articles about the oppression of dissent post-9/11 and about the US suckering the Soviet Union into their Afghan war are also interesting and well-written. What prevents a total thumbs up is the sometimes sectarian tone and the inclusion of dubious and self-serving press releases (ACT UP-SF). Still, overall it's a good read.
ARA/PART / PO Box 1055 / Culver City, CA 90232
Part2001@usa.net

UNDER THE VOLCANO #65 / $2.95
8.5 x 11 - printed - 56 pgs
Pretty much just interviews and reviews with some short columns. Bands are Nobodys, Scissorfight, Kill Your Idols, Fireballs of Freedom. None of the interviews grabbed me, but then I'm not really into any of those bands. The columns were a waste of time except for the one really fucked up "USA all the way" one, which was an embarassment. (GF)
PO Box 236 / Nesconset, NJ 11767
RBlackUTV@aol.com

WALKIE TALKIE #3 / $2.25
10.5 x 6.5 - printed - 34 pgs
Of good length and absorbing content, *Walkie Talkie* was the perfect read for a ride on the 24 Divisadero from San Jose Ave. to Hayes St. Issue 3 is one long comic story that dissects youth, loss, and the parallels between language and sanity. While the text left me a little confused at times, the illustrations captured my heart: a strong use of black backgrounds and thin lines of shading are used to create memorable characters and vivid settings. (SD)
Nate Powell / 7205 Geronimo / North Little Rock, AR 72116
sophiebones@hotmail.com



WAR AGAINST THE IDIOTS #22 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
Consisting of typed text and a few graphics, this zine reads much like a personal journal in parts relating narratives of travel, relationships, conversations with interesting people, and letters to the editor. I really liked this zine for its sparse style, simplicity, and mildly self-deprecating perspective. (JL)
1731 Cleveland St / Evanston, IL 60202



WOMEN'S SELF DEFENSE #1 / $2
7 x 8.5 - copied - 56 pgs
This zine is almost enough to renew my faith in this media as a form of connection, information, and a radical alternative to mainstream crap. You may be able to guess from the title, but this focuses on self defense methods for women, as well as personal stories on how many women dealt with harassment, assault, and attacks—how they fought back and survived. This is inspirational and I would love to see this continue and grow into something that encourages women everywhere to teach each other survival skills—not only for the physical, but also the psychic damage that bombards us every day on the streets—and to stand together to fight back and protect each other. This has a lot of networking potential and I strongly recommend this zine to every woman reading this review. The proceeds also benefit a local women's self defense group. Ariel is also looking for submissions of comix, ideas, rants, resources, reviews related to this subject. (MD)
Ariel / PO Box 411621 / Chicago, IL 60641-1621
mspippilotta@yahoo.com <mailto:mspippilotta@yahoo.com>

WORLD WAR 3 ILLUSTRATED #31 / $5.50 US, $6.50 world
8 x 10.5 - printed - 68 pgs
I'm always glad to find *WW3* in my bin. This issue's theme is "against global capital." There are first-hand reports from Argentina, India's Narmada River Valley (site of an enormous and displacing dam project), Chiapas, and Bogota; also news from Colombia and Turkey, and about the FTAA and the WTO. This issue has more text than previous ones I've seen, but the graphics are striking as ever. As always, an amazing magazine, well worth the money. (JM)
PO Box 20777 / Tompkins Square Station / New York, NY 10009

ZOOP! ALTERNATIV' ZINE #17 / 15ff
6 x 8.25 - copied - 66 pgs - French
Fresh on the heels of last month's, here's another copy of *Zoop*! (which I erringly referred to as just *Alternativ' Zine* in *MRR* #226). Once again, inside are tons of scene resources for punk rockers (like you!), activists, and anarchists in France and abroad. This issue is twice as long, filled with short interviews, reviews of journals, zines, records, and more, an interactive word game for readers, and the obligatory reprints from pamphlets. (AC)
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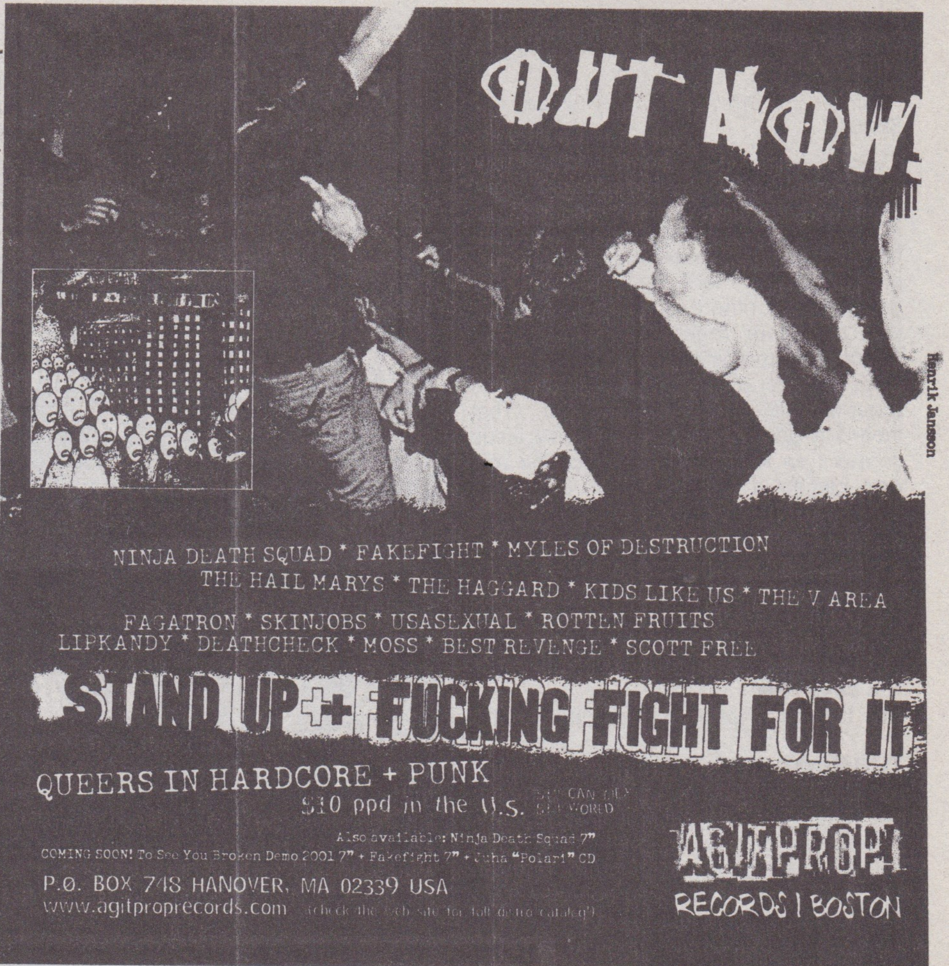

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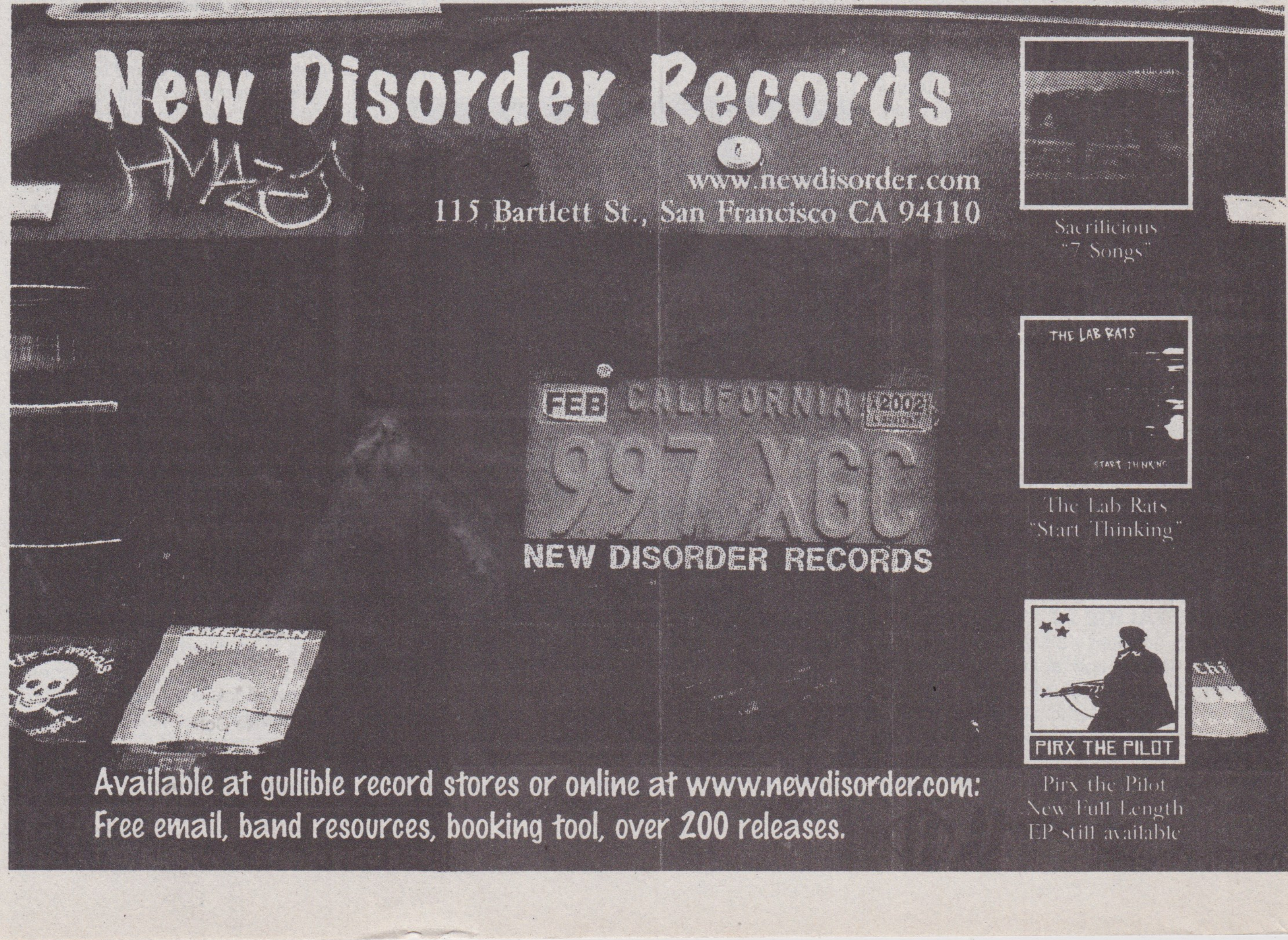

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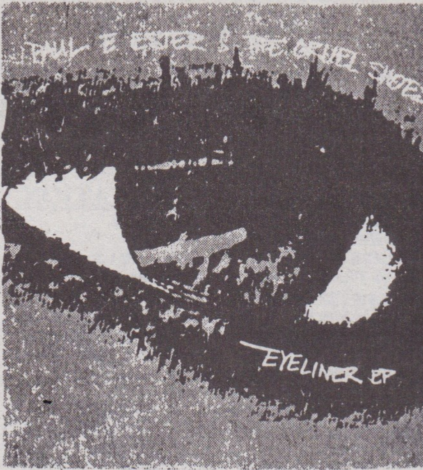
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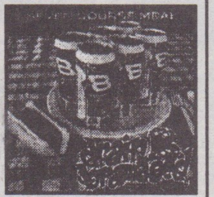

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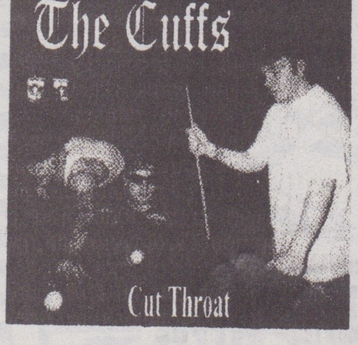

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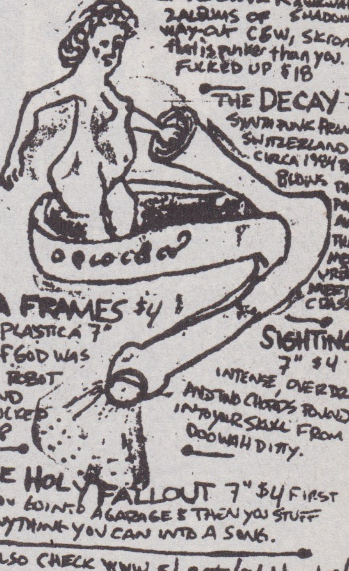

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